HOMEWORLD: CATACLYSM

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PART ONE – HISTORICAL BRIEF

HISTORY OF THE HIIGARAN LANDFALL

The story of the Kushan Exodus to Hiigara is widely known and often told; most of us already know all about the voyage. In six months, the survivors of our entire race traveled from the prison world of Kharak to our once and future homeworld. The trip was a major turning point not only for the Kushan people, but for most of the civilized galaxy; our return to Hiigara was not only the end of our 3,000-year exile, but the end of the Taidani Empire, and its tyranny over billions.

By the ancient Kharakian dating system, the Kushan people returned to Hiigara in the year 1216 (Galactic Standard Year 9,510). In honor of the momentous occasion, Kiith Sjet declared the beginning of a new calendar on the day the returning Kushan first set foot on our homeworld. By decree, the Hiigaran Landfall marked the first day of a new Year Zero. From that time on, "days" have been measured by Hiigara's period of rotation, and "years" according to the revolutions of Hiigara around its mother sun.

By the new dating system, these words are written in the year 15 AHL (GSY 9525)-15 years after Hiigaran Landfall. The past decade and a half have been a time of both celebration and adversity for the Kushan people. Nearly 550,000 of us survived the Exodus from Kharak, but our culture has been subjected to tremendous stress. There is not a single aspect of Kushan existence which we have not been forced to re-examine in light of our new circumstances. Even the simplest things, like providing our population with food and shelter, have proved far more complicated than we ever imagined.

Defending ourselves has been our most serious concern. The Bentusi and the new Taidanii Republic have established a small buffer zone around Hiigara, a region approximately 10 lightyears in diameter. Anything within a 5 lightyear radius of Hiigara is considered our space, and we are obligated to defend it. Our warrior kiithid are forced to maintain constant patrols to keep our spaceways from being overrun, not only by the mongrel ships of the pirate races, but by the last bitter remnants of the Imperial fleet.

The Mothership, which once carried our people safely across 35,000 lightyears of uncharted space, is no longer

fully operational. Deprived of the conscious direction of Karan Sjet, the Mothership's engines are set on automatic; She serves as an orbital space station and shipyard. Manned by a skeleton crew of 8,000 engineers, the Mothership provides living quarters for those working in low orbit, and She has given birth to over 30 carrier-class ships since the Hiigaran Landfall. The result of this phenomenal output has been a new Hiigaran navy, which consists of six great Fleets; the largest of our present-day kiithid have each taken command of an autonomous carrier group. The fleets of Manaan, Soban, Naabal, LiirHra, Paktu and Kaalel take turns patrolling the outer systems, guarding our trade routes, and defending Hiigara itself.

Addressing the practical concerns of our people has been hard enough; up until the year 11 AHL (9521 GSY) , food rationing was common, and on the surface of Hiigara, thousands are still engaged in construction. Providing for our peoples' practical needs has been difficult, however, providing for their political needs has been far, far more troublesome. Kushan society has been in a state of flux since the Exodus; finding some way to give all our people a fair say in government is a serious problem, and no one is entirely satisfied by any solution.

The New Daiamid was completed in the year 4 AHL, (9514 GSY) the crowning glory of our planetary capital at Asaam Kiith'sid. The Daiamid Assembly is still the main governing body of the Kushan race, although its detractors claim that the New Daiamid cannot rule as fairly as its predecessor on Kharak once did. Such hotheads denounce the current Assembly as a sham, and maintain that a few families wield too much power. Sadly, there is some merit to this accusation! Over one-half of the Kushan population now belong to one of six kiithid, and by virtue of sheer population the major families have tremendous influence. The Paktu, the Manaan, the Sjet, Naabal, LiirHra, Kaalel and Soban are by far the largest kiith groupings in existence, and their combined numbers come to almost 300,000. By contrast, the majority of other kiithid on Hiigara can boast a few hundred souls at best; most are lucky to have even that many. In some cases the kiithid, once over 100,000 strong on Kharak, now only have 30 or 40 members.

These smaller kiithid are now collectively known as the Sleepers, because most of them spent the voyage from Kharak in cryogenic suspension. Coming from all walks of life, the only thing that these men and women have in common today is their powerlessness in the present Daiamid system. Unable to compete with large kiithid which can lay claim to half a continent at a time, exhausted by years of struggle for a voice in the Assembly, many of these small kiithid have given up the fight to establish a power base for themselves on Hiigara. Dozens of Sleeper clans have chosen in recent years to abandon their ancient names and become vassals instead, joining their bloodlines to powerhouses like the Paktu or the Naabal. The family honor comes a poor second, as always, to survival; surrendering to necessity is an ancient tradition among the Kushan. It may eventually come to pass that the entire kiith system, which still connects us to the life we once lived on Kharak, will collapse.
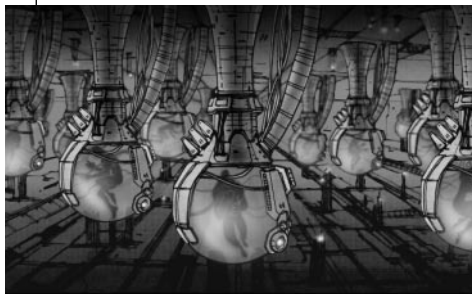
THE RUDE AWAKENING

Sleepers aboard the Mothership would not learn of the destruction of Kharak until the long journey to Hiigara had been completed.

THE RUDE AWAKENING

One of the most difficult aspects of the Hiigaran Landfall was the revival of our so-called "Sleeper Kiithid", the 92% of our current population who traveled from Kharak to Hiigara in cryogenic suspension. Upon arrival on Hiigara, most of our Sleepers faced a very rude awakening. In some ways, our society is still trying to cope with what they were told, when they rose from cold storage.

There was good news, of course. Every Sleeper was delighted to hear that the Mothership and its crew had arrived safely on our Homeworld, that the mystery of our origins had been solved, and that the oppressive regime which once banished us to the far reaches of space had been defeated. But there was very, very bad news as well: unlike our fighting men and women, the Sleepers had no six-month struggle for survival to cushion their shock and horror when they heard that Kharak had been destroyed.

No one awakened on Hiigara without an immediate burden of grief and loss...and sometimes guilt and anger as well. When they went to sleep, most Sleepers had accepted the possibility that they would never see their loved ones again, but it was generally assumed that those onboard the Mothership would be in far greater danger than those we left behind. The Sleepers began their mission with a willingness to sacrifice themselves, secure in the knowledge that their own families and friends would carry on and remember them, if worst came to worst. The irony of finding that the crew of the Mothership were the only survivors of our race was too much for many to bear. In the first few weeks after Landfall, there were dozens of suicides.

Only 1 out of every 60 Kushan was aboard the Mothership at launch. Volunteers for Sleep had been forced to meet some basic criteria for useful skills, age and health. This seemed extremely reasonable at the time, simple common sense; but some of those practical decisions had cruel consequences in hindsight. For example, no persons under the age of 17 or over the age of 50 were accepted; the freezing process was considered too great a risk for those not in optimal condition. There were no children aboard the Mothership, nor any of our elders. When Kharak burned, the majority of Sleepers lost their blood links to both past and future; they were left with nothing to hold on to but a few seconds of torturous satellite footage...pictures of our loved ones being burned alive by the Taidan Imperium.

The Burning of Kharak has kindled a great hatred in the Kushan people, of this there can be no doubt. The savagery of the Imperial attacks both on Kharak and on their own cryogenic storage units has filled our Sleepers with what can only be described as bloodthirsty rage...and as many have pointed out, watching the video footage of the Emperor's personal guard being cut to ribbons is not the same as being there! We cope with this anger in various ways, but our society still boils with resentment of the Taidani in general. Of course, most of our people are capable of distinguishing between the Imperium, which wronged us so cruelly, and the current besieged Taidan Republic, which is still ruled by the Rebels who helped us win back Hiigara...but sadly, not everyone can make this distinction. With the constant threat of Imperialist rule, for many Kushan, the only good

Taidani is a dead one and even the moderates are pushing for he annexation of nearby former Taidan worlds in the name of security for Hiigara.

All of us have had to make some kind of peace with the past, and go on as best we can. Some of us have thrown ourselves into the hard work of construction, trying to recreate some small part of what we lost; some of us have hastened to bring new children into our depleted kiithid. Others have volunteered for military service, and spend their days repelling Imperial and pirate attacks on our borders. But for some, the ordinary means of coping do not suffice...

No one embodies the Kushan hatred of Imperials more perfectly than the man now known as Iifrit Tambuur'sa. Iifrit is the last living member of the Tambuur kiith, and for the past twelve years he has lived largely in the new Taidan Republic. Tambuur'sa and his young wife, Dava, were the only members of Kiith Tambuur who made the Gold List, back on Kharak; both of them were chosen as Sleepers, and they were frozen side by side some months before the Mothership was launched. Unfortunately, when the Taidanii burned Kharak, they also turned and opened fire on our cryogenic storage units; Dava Tambuur's life pod was one of many to be irreparably damaged by the Taidani attack, and she died in transit to Hiigara. When Iifrit Tambuur awoke from cold sleep, he found that he had lost not only his entire kiith, but his beloved wife as well. He declared Paaura on the Taidan Imperium, and several Kushan survivors who sympathized with his cause became honorary members of Kiith Tambuur, in order to share in his "eternal vengeance". Out of respect for the ancient vow of Paaura, Tambuur'sa and his people were granted the use of a small frigate, and he has since become one of the most famous bounty hunters in this quadrant of the galaxy, credited with collecting the heads of over 300 Imperial war criminals.

HISTORY OF KIITH

Kushan society is organized along loose family associations. An extended family grouping is called a Kiith (plural: Kiithid) and most anthrocists agree it is a social artifact that probably dates back before our arrival on Kharak itself. Interpretation of ancient legends and translations of texts found in the ruins of Khar-Toba suggest that over generations, all social structures except the most basic family bonds have broken down.

A Kiith has a loose hierarchy based on one's social position within the family. Originally this was based primarily on seniority, but as technology has changed the face of life on Kharak, the Kiithid too have changed, and now family ranking is based more on wealth or personal influence than simple age. Organization within the Kiith is recursive in nature, and models that of a core family unit. Where a single family has a Primary leader, a secondary and then a group of dependants, the next level of Kiith organization is based on the same system. There is a Primary family who makes policy decisions, a Secondary family which hears disputes and makes recommendations, and a number of families of lesser power that have sworn allegiance to the Primary. The Primary family for a Kiith is called the Kiith-Sa.

This structure is not static by any means, and, while it is not a trivial matter, families are free to change their primary allegiances as they see fit. A family's position within the Kith rises and falls with how many swear allegiance to them. Although it is much more rare, from time to time a family will move from one Kiith to another or even feel the need to begin a full Kiith of their own.

In ancient times, a Kiith-Sa could direct the entire Kiith to war, demand all families dedicate time and finances to special projects, or even move the Kiith to another region. In modern times, the Kiith-Sa is a political and financial leader only in that it acts on the wishes of the entire Kiith as established by referendums. The Kiith-Sa from all over Kharak meet in the Great Daiamid located in the capital of Tiir to debate global policy and resolve legal conflicts between Kiiths.

Traditionally, Kiiths usually concentrate their power in one or two disciplines and gather families under their banner by being the best place to find advancement in a particular field. For example, Kiith Sjet has been associated with the sciences on Kharak for over a thousand years, and is known to have the most advanced computer labs in the world. Bonded couples interested in the field often apply to a S'jet family associated with such labs. Alliances between Kiith are also based on mutual interests, and they often lead to closer ties or complete reorganizations.

Never has the Kiith system faced such upheaval than during the years following our people's arrival on Hiigara, the homeworld.

KIITH HISTORY: SOMTAAW

Of the earliest days of Kiith Somtaaw little is known, although this ancient family could once trace its unbroken lineage back over 1,000 years on Kharak. The Somtaaw made their ancestral homes in the peaks and valleys of the Kohntala Mountain range, one of the more dramatic geographic features in Kharak's northern hemisphere. In the first and second centuries, Somtaaw's holdings in the Khontala were rich and varied, running the gamut from farms, dams, and mills to fortresses and towns, including the walled cities of Hameln and Gydeo. The kiith was more than self-sufficient; the terraced farms of the lowlands and the seasonal grazing pastures of the highlands produced a great surplus of food and hides, and the Somtaaw prospered in trade.

Starting in the year 178, Kharakian artists from various disciplines were gathered under the patronage of Teigor Somtaaw, one of the most enlightened kiith'sid of his time. Employing hundreds of skilled masons, painters, architects and weavers, Kiith Somtaaw began building a series of temples on the slopes of the mountain called Lungma Jiin, "The Roof of the World". There were 33 temples in all, leading from the sands of the Kasaar to the very summit of what was, at that time, the world's highest known mountain.

Collectively, the 33 temples of the Somtaaw were known as "The Shimmering Path". For nearly 400 years, it was considered the height of spiritual devotion for a religiously inclined Kharakian to walk the Shimmering Path; most Kharakians attempted the trip at least once a lifetime. Beginning at the first temple, the Oracle of Tala, the distance that a pilgrim was able to travel on his or her own feet was considered a watermark for the strength of the Faith that burned within.

The vast majority of Kharakians finished the pilgrimage at the Seventh Temple, the famous "Dome of Heaven", which lay within the city walls of Gydeo. For those stubborn few who felt the need to move closer to god, however, there were 26 more temples along the Shimmering Path, each more inaccessible than the last. The highest of these was Temple of the Mysteries, which very few travelers could reach; the upper slopes of Lungma Jiin were a blasted ladder of crumbling granite and thin ice, and constantly buffeted by freezing gale force winds. According to legend, the most sacred relics of the Somtaaw were kept on the altar of this temple, and any pilgrim who made the journey on foot was permitted to touch them: the famed Star-Metal Scrolls, which were alleged to have been written by the hand of Jakuul Himself, in a language which no living man could read.

Up until the discovery of Khar Toba, most serious Kharakian scholars had assumed that the Somtaaw's Star Metal Scrolls were just a myth, very much like their Chalice of Life or any other mystical refuse from Kharakian legend. Before the discovery of the Guidestone, the Star-Metal Scrolls were put into the same category as Soban's sword Caaliburnos, or the Burning Spear of Gaalsi. However, given the discovery of the Guidestone, a great deal of new interest was generated in the Somtaaw holy relics. Many prominent anthrocists and historians, including the famous Mevath Sagald, joined forces and put a motion before the Great Daiamid at Tiir, requesting that the Somtaaw's upper temples, which had been closed to outsiders for over 300 years, be re-opened for the benefit of modern-day scholars.

Alas, nothing came of this motion before the Burning of Kharak. Representatives from Kiith Somtaaw dragged their heels in the Daiamid assembly, and even went so far as to suggest that archaeologists should approach the Temple of Mysteries on foot, dressed in traditional pilgrim's clothes! Sagald and her coalition declared this notion "ridiculous", and openly referred to the Somtaaw as "backward barbarians". Many Sagald supporters pointed out that the Daiamid was founded to hear sound logical debates, not to listen to superstitious nonsense! Arguments on both sides were still being heard when the Mothership was launched.

In any case, we will never know what we might have learned from the Somtaaw Scrolls; they were lost with the rest of Kharak, and among the Somtaaw survivors who awoke on Hiigara 15 years ago, there were none who could claim to have seen them. Since the later days of the Heresy Wars, Kiith Somtaaw had largely abandoned their role as a religious kiith; by the time of the Exodus, the vast majority of Somtaaw's kiithid were engaged in another profession, the profession by which they are still best known today: mining.

The transformation of Kiith Somtaaw from a primary religious kiith to a hard-working miner's kiith was a slow and painful one, and involved many generations of privation and suffering. The centuries of the Heresy Wars were hard times for the Somtaaw; their Khontala mountains provided a natural barrier between the forces of Gaalsi and Siid, and both sides struggled urgently to subdue or seduce the Somtaaw for nearly two hundred years. The flow of pilgrims to Somtaaw temples slowed disastrously in a world at war, and soon there was not enough money flowing into the kiith's coffers to maintain those temples in their intended role, as way-stations along the Shimmering Path. Eventually, in the year 675, all 33 of the Somtaaw temples were closed to outsiders, except for the Oracle of Tala and the Dome of Heaven.

By virtue of their own sheer stubbornness, and the natural protection provided by the narrow passes and forbidding peaks of their homeland, the Somtaaw were able to hold off all invaders during the worst of the Siidim and Gaalsien conflict. More difficult to resist, however, was the seduction of becoming a vassal clan, especially when the Somtaaw holdings, although easy to defend, were also easy to cut off from trade routes. Even a small garrison could hold the Kasaar like a cork in a bottle, and keep the Somtaaw trapped in their mountain fortresses; invaders couldn't enter, but neither could caravans and other visitors. Contact with the outside was sporadic throughout the seventh and eighth centuries...the Somtaaw held no goods sufficiently inviting to keep the Kasaar Road open.

This changed in the year 789, when Kuura Somtaaw, then kiith'sa of the 30,000 souls who still made their homes in the Khontala, awoke one night from a strange dream. Kuura had seen the image of the god Sajuuk, driving a great red sword into the earth in the Khontala mountains, in a seldom-visited region far from the main roads. Driven by the urgency of her vision, she ordered several smaller families to begin digging in the Red Creek valley. Because their kiith'sa was descended from the temple women of Tala, the Somtaaw reluctantly obeyed, and several Somtaaw kiithid moved to the area and began the excavation, although no one was quite certain what they were looking for.

What the Somtaaw found at Red Creek was a deposit of the richest iron ore ever seen on Kharak, which lay just six feet below the soft sediments of the valley floor. Here was enough metal to be hammered into a hundred thousand swords, and Kiith Somtaaw was not slow to announce their find to the rest of the world. Although both Siid and Gaalsi offered ruinous sums to buy the mine, or the ore that it produced, Kuura Somtaaw refused to trade with either side. In her own words, "Why should I sell these madmen a knife to cut my throat with?"

Instead, the Somtaaw built their own smelters and began mixing the iron with carbon, producing a very high grade steel...a commodity far more precious than gold, especially during those dangerous times. An arrangement that eventually sustained Kuura Somtaaw's kiith was made with the Sobanii, who immediately saw the use for Somtaaw steel and the superior weapons that could be forged from it. In exchange for a yearly tribute from the smelters at Hameln, the Soban signed an unheard-of contract; the mercenary kiith agreed to keep the Kasaar open and clear of marauders for a period of no less than one hundred years!

With the Naabal intervention, the Somtaaw expanded their operations, throwing themselves into their new profession with the kiith's customary enthusiasm. Although they never developed any significant technological advances on their own, they were always quick to buy, copy or outright steal any new tool or technique, once

another kiith had put it into operation. Thus the Somtaaw profited greatly from the introduction of steam-powered drills, narrow-gauge railroads and chemical explosives. By the time of the Exodus, Kiith Somtaaw was nearly 500,000 strong, and had even built new holdings alongside great industrial kiithid like Naabal and LiirHra, to the extent of opening off-planet mines in the Kharakian asteroid belt.

The return to Hiigara was not as joyous for Somtaaw as for many of our people. Although a few of their number were awake during the journey from Kharak, employed in the care and maintenance of resource collectors, the vast majority of Somtaaw survivors were Sleepers during the journey. When they were awakened on Hiigara, many were horrified to hear that the families and loved ones they left on Kharak were gone, and that there was no hope of return. Of a kiith that had once been so strong, very few survivors remained; only 15,000 Somtaaw awakened on Kharak, less than a twentieth of their number, and the vast majority of these were men.

Kiith Naabal elders address the New Daiamid.

Somtaaw's fortunes were further complicated by a political conflict with Kiith Naabal, which made a bid seven years after landfall to absorb the Somtaaw survivors as a vassal clan. It was argued in the New Daiamid that Somtaaw's kiithid had valuable skills, which could be of the greatest possible use to Hiigara if channeled by Naabal's industrial planning committees. According to the Naabal, it was in the best interests of all Hiigarans if Somtaaw joined with Kiith Naabal, and provided their mining expertise to the Naabal-owned colonies throughout the Hiigaran buffer zone. Many such mergers had taken place in the past decade, with benefits for all concerned.

Somtaaw flatly refused this proposition, and the debate between Somtaaw and Naabal supporters in the New Daiamid has already been cited by many as a history-making event. According to the Somtaaw survivors, larger and more powerful kiithid like Naabal were deliberately campaigning to deprive the weakened Sleeper clans of their sovereign rights, which included the staking of land claims on Hiigara, a voice in the New Daiamid, and access to the ship-building capabilities of the Mothership Station. Given that the Mothership's building array had already provided whole fleets to the larger kiithid, and no less than fifteen carrier groups each to Naabal, Soban, Kaalel and Manaan, Kiith Somtaaw argued that they also had the right to seek their fortune among the stars. They proposed to build themselves a tonnage of starships which was proportional to their kiith numbers.

During the Somtaaw/Naabal debate, dispossessed members of many Kharak's devastated kiithid joined the Somtaaw as family members, swelling their ranks from 15,000 to nearly 25,000 in a few short months. The matter was contended for months in the Daiamid, with the larger kiithid of the inner council arguing bitterly. Kiith Soban honored its ancient ties to Somtaaw and opposed Naabal's power-hungry crusade, and so did the Paktu, a kiith inclined to support Somtaaw both out of historical sympathy with the underdog and respect for the rising confederation of Somtaaw with other weakened kiithid. On the opposite side of the table, Kiith LiirHra supported Naabal vigorously, citing the benefits of their own union with the survivors of the Hraal.

The Kuun-Lan undergoes final systems check before launch. The Faal-Corum had left dock two days earlier.

The matter was eventually decided in favour of Somtaaw by a very narrow margin in the Diamid and only after the Somtaaw managed to convince the disenfranchised kiith to threaten a general strike over the issue. While many of the established Kiith accused Somtaaw of further undermining the ancient social systems for their own benifit, the result was Somtaaw was granted access to the Mothership Station for a period of six months. Mothership access for other lesser Kiith soon followed. In their time, the Somtaaw built two enormous mining ships, the Kuun-Lan and the Fal-Corum, which were both launched, fully manned, within 45 days. In the final days of their control over the Mothership's PDA, Kiith Somtaaw triumphantly built one final ship, the Clee San, a top-of-the-line deep space research frigate. Students of history will note that the names of all three vessels derive from the names of temples along the old Shimmering Path: Kuun-Lan, "Purifying Flame", Fal-Corum, "Silent Wayfarer", and Clee San, "Truth Seeker"...

The Clee-San, Kiith Somtaaw's third and final ship. Designed for deep space mining exploration, the Clee-San is equipped with an impression sensor array and equally impressive onboard science facilities.

Since then the Somtaaw have explored many neighboring systems to Hiigara. Although their numbers are small, they've set up several mining stations to collect rare elements, and they sell the fruits of their labors to all clients allowed by the current Hiigaran trade regulations. Like all our kiithid, their ships are bound to respond to any call to arms, when Hiigaran space is violated. But beyond the Somtaaw's duty to Hiigara, they live free and bend knee to none but their own kiith'sa...maintaining a centuries-long tradition.

THE TAIDAN REPUBLIC

The end of the Imperial Era

The return of the Exiles to their Homeworld did more than mark a new beginning for life on Hiigara; it also helped to bring about the end of the Taidani Imperial line, which had ruled continuously for nearly 3,000 standard years.

The Taidan Empire of Year 0 AL (9510 Galactic Standard Year) held 150 star systems in its grip, but not easily. Emperor Riesstiu IV the Second was rapidly approaching his 4th century of life, and his pogroms and agendas were becoming increasingly bloody and erratic. Relations with other Galactic civilizations were at an all time low, with the Empire receiving regular censure from the Galactic Council during their twice-per-decade assemblies. The Frerrn Aggregate was in a state undeclared war with the Taidan Empire over a number of border issues on the Far Rim, and even the Bentusi had suspended all trade contact with the Taidan in the year -7 BL (9503 GSY.)

Internal Taidani politics was faring even worse in these last years of the Empire. Tax revolts in the outer systems were a common occurrence, as Emperor Riesstiu IV's increasing paranoia led to a prohibitively large and expensive military. The Taidan Assembly of Lords, a token political body whose task was merely to "rubber stamp" edicts from the desk of the Emperor, even began to question some of Riesstiu's more outrageous demands. The entire political system of the Imperium was corrupt and on the verge of collapse when a Mothership of unknown design breached Taidani borders, and destroyed 3000 years of political stagnation.

A powerful group of military, political and economic figures had been plotting a coup in secret for years, staying only steps ahead of one purge or another as they looked desperately for the trigger that could sway 360 billion souls against their God-like Emperor. Oddly enough, it wasn't the plight of the Kharakian Exiles as much as the mindless obedience of the Taidani navy which created that trigger. When the first propaganda images spread through the Empire, showing yet another victory, this time against an ancient and forgotten enemy, it soon became obvious that a serious mistake had been made on the part of the Emperor's political advisors. Instead of reassuring the Taidani people that their nigh-immortal Emperor was all-seeing and all-powerful, the Taidan reacted with near-universal horror and disgust. Again and again they were forced to watch one of their fleets commit an act of genocide against 300 million aliens, who had committed no crime greater than entering hyperspace and violating a long-forgotten treaty.

The Emperor reacted quickly and ordered the Home Fleet to hunt down and destroy the Exiles before they could penetrate Taidan space, but it was too late. The political damage had been done, and the secret conspirators launched their coup against an obviously mad Emperor. While the initial groundswell of support was very strong, the conspirators and the general public seriously underestimated how prepared the Empire was for just such a rebellion, and how far their leaders were willing to go in order to maintain their stranglehold on power. After the first few heady days of rebellion, the Emperor declared full martial-law across the Taidani worlds. According to his edict, no act performed in the defense of His Throne would be judged in civilian courts.

The death and destruction that followed this announcement throughout the Empire beggars the imagination. For every military unit that defected to the Coup, 2 others launched an orgy of brutal reprisals. Dukes and Governors that were unwilling to massacre protestors en masse were executed and replaced by ones who would. Entire rebellious asteroid cities were exterminated when navy corvettes destroyed their life support systems, and the slow death throes of millions were recorded, to be shown as an example to the rest of the population. By the end of the first month it was obvious to all but the most optimistic that the Emperor's grip on the Taidan could

not be thrown off. The final blow was nearly struck at the battle of Vorshan's Rift, where the gathered rebel Navy was ambushed and devastated due to a high level defector, who led the rebels into a trap. The ranking surviving military member of the coup fled for his life, directly into the arms of the one force in the galaxy that was successfully resisting Imperial power: the returning Exile Fleet. Luckily for the rebellion, the Exiles aided the Rebel officer, allowing him the chance to escape and regroup the tattered remnants of his fleet.

When news broke that the Exiles were actively aiding the rebellion, it was the final insult to the Emperor. Riesstiu declared that he would personally command the Taidani High Guard fleet in their crusade against the interlopers. The final battle took place high above the Exile's ancient Homeworld, Hiigara, and when it was over the Emperor lay dead and his Elite guard fleet was shattered.

In the resulting chaos, the Rebels seized their last chance and destroyed the Imperial Gene bank. Without a clear line of succession through cloning, the Emperor having long ago executed any living relative who might try to kill him and take power, the Imperial structure collapsed. In its place was erected a new Taidan Republic.

THE TAIDAN REPUBLIC

Even after the death of the Emperor, the new Taidan Republic has had anything but a smooth ride from tyranny to democracy. What was supposed to be a quick and relatively painless coup flared into a full blown civil war after the battle of Hiigara. Various factions tried to seize control of the Empire, while entire sectors fought for independence. After 5 years of skirmishes and all-out battles, the Taidan Republic finally stabilized and established an uneasy peace within itself...but by the time the shooting stopped, only 60 out of a 150 star systems were willing to call themselves Taidani. Most of these loyal worlds are centered in the Galactic Core, while the spiral regions of the old Empire have splintered into a variety of small kingdoms, duchies and independent democratic states.

The Republic is still struggling to restore order both internally and externally and has met with some success. In year 6 AL (9516 GSY), the Republic signed a formal non-aggression and co-operation pact with the Exiles, which recognized their ancient claim to Hiigara. A 5-light-year sphere of influence was also granted the new Hiigarans, in recognition of their aid to the Republic during the dark days of the Coup. Currently, the Republic and Hiigara share excellent relations, which has only been helped by the Republic's willingness to extradite war criminals who took part in the Kharakian Genocide. The Republic also re-established trade relations with the enigmatic Bentusi, and it is rumored that the Bentusi have been crucial in supplying the new Republic with the technology, infrastructure and information it needs. Despite these advances, the Republic continues to splinter away system after system as local leaders decide they are better off on their own, than to be drawn into any Taidani conflict to come.

While most analysts still are debating whether the worst is over for the Taidan Republic, all agree that stability needs to be based on military security for the former Empire. With a few years of planning time, the Republic has stopped trying to match the Imperialist factions on a gun-to-gun basis, and are now trying to seize the high ground by using advanced technologies. The Taidani military invested vast amounts of their financial reserves in manpower, for a few crucial fleet Research Stations. Their hope was of making ship design and weapon breakthroughs that would allow them to defend the Republic's borders with a vastly reduced fleet. All the progress made by the Republic could be destroyed overnight, should the surviving Imperialists find a way to overthrow the Republic, and return a new Emperor to the ancient Throne of Worlds.

The Imperialist Faction

With the Empire shattered, it was to be expected that many major Imperial figures would flee the Republic to carve their own domains in the splintered frontier worlds. Many of these Imperialists call themselves "Loyalists", and support any one of hundreds of "lost heirs" that have been sprung up over the past 15 years. While the Imperialist fleet is but a battered shadow of its former power, it is still a significant threat on the frontier, where many secret naval bases from the Imperial era are intact and functioning.

Imperialist power remains in the hands of the fleet, and while these once-proud ships have been forced to work as equals with pirates or hire themselves out as mercenaries, they are still a force to be reckoned with, and still a major threat to the stability of the Republic. Twice in the past 15 years the Imperialists tried to unite the splintered kingdoms by force of arms, only to be defeated by their own factionalism and the military intervention of the Galactic Council.

Apart from the desire to overthrow the new Republic, the only other thing that binds the Imperialist Factions together is their deep, abiding hatred of the new Hiigarans. The Imperialist hold the Exiles and their quest for their Homeworld directly responsible for the Emperor's death and the fall of the Empire. Amongst Imperialist supporters, it is an oft-quoted prophecy that Empire will only rise again when the Imperial Fleet once again orbits Hiigara, and the work begun with the Kharakian Genocide is finished once and for all.

Needless to say, a state of open warfare exists between Hiigara and all Imperialist factions. Three times in the past 15 years, (in 4, 9 and 11 AL) the Imperialist led major incursions into the Hiigaran sphere of influence. In the latter two invasions, strike fleets reached Hiigara itself, only to be thrown back with heavy losses on both sides. While Hiigaran shipping is constantly being harassed by Imperialist forces, either operating by themselves or in conjunction with the Turanic Raiders, it has been 4 years since any significant fleet actions took place in the Hiigaran sphere. This led some analysts to conclude that the Imperialist forces are more interested in consolidating the splinter kingdoms than wasting more strength and technology on a blood feud with a single world. Others merely consider this to be the quiet before another inevitable storm.

TURANIC RAIDERS

No other group has profited more from the anarchy caused by the retaking of Hiigara and the resulting Taiidani civil war, than the Turanic Raiders. Nothing is known about the origins of this nomadic race of pirates and mercenaries but theories range from a disposed race of refugees to a former slave race run amuck. Attacks by Turanic Raiders were first recorded during the year -475 BL (GSY 9035) in the Turan Sector and hence the name given to this enigmatic warrior species. Turanic hordes have infested the trade lanes of the galaxy at least twice a century since their arrival and no matter how much effort is put into hunting them down by one government or another, they always survive in some hidden base to emerge years later. Most of this growth-and-retreat cycle is spent raiding lone ships or unprotected convoys in order to slowly build up their power base. The Raiders are at the height of their power fielding carrier groups, are capable of taking over entire asteroid settlements.

The Turanic Raiders have never been stronger than they were during much of the 1'st century BL when they enjoyed the patronage of the Mad Taiidani Emperor Riestiu IV. While most details were covered up at the time, new documents released by the Taiidan Republic during various war crimes trials have revealed the Turanic Raiders were supported by Imperial funds and supplies. Many of the targets hit by the raiders during this period were of special military value. Intelligence gathered during these attacks, aided the Emperor to stymie the efforts of neighboring galactic powers and limit their ambitions. Reliable estimates place Turanic Fleet strengths at nearly 20 carrier groups spread throughout the Imperial Frontier before the Homeworld War.

Unfortunately for the Raiders, the death of Emperor Reistiu IV and the fall of the Taiidan Empire brought about their fall as well. As if sensing the wake of history that rippled away from the Exile fleet as it approached Hiigara, the Turanic Raiders went into hiding and denied the Emperor their firepower when he faced the Exiles in final battle. The reasons for this may never be exactly known, but when the Taiidani Empire fractured from the pressure of civil war, the Raiders were in perfect position to seize power in many outlying provinces of the Empire. These new "Bandit Kingdoms" as they have become known, are centers of power for a new, organized Turanic presence in the Galaxy and in a final irony, it is now Imperialist factions who come to the Raiders seeking patronage. The current level of Imperialist/Raider co-operation is not truly known at this point, but there have been scattered reports in recent years of mixed fleets performing strike and capture operations.

Despite these reports, Raider activity has been relatively low and most experts agree that the Turanic Raiders are in a build up phase that will continue for quite some time. The only dissenting voice in the Turanic analysis comes from several Hiigaran Warrior Kiith, who point out the growing number of Hiigaran combat and transport vessels that have been lost in anomalous circumstances in the past 2 years. The animosity of the Raiders towards the new Hiigarans is well known, and these losses may be due to new or exotic technologies being introduced into the Raider's fleet by their Imperialist Allies.

NOTES: ....

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PART TWO – TECHNICAL BRIEF + GAMEPLAY GUIDE

INSTALLATION

Insert the CD- ROM into your CD- ROM drive. The Cataclysm Installation program will automatically start up. Follow the on-screen instructions to specify the various installation options. When the installation is complete, it will have created a shortcut in your Start Menu that you can use to run Cataclysm.

If the Cataclysm Installation program does not start up, double-click on the "my computer" icon on your desktop. Double-click on the CD-ROM drive icon. In the file window, double-click on the file icon of AUTORUN.EXE. Follow the instructions on screen.

GAME CONTROLS

THE RIGHT-CLICK MENU

At any point during the game, you can get a detailed list of command options (some specific to the ships selected) by right-clicking.

NOTE: When you have the context sensitive right-click enabled (by default), you cannot right-click with the mouse pointer over some ships and objects in the display. This occurs when a special action icon is present below the pointer. Simply move the mouse pointer until no icon is present beneath the pointer and then press the right mouse button to bring up the desired menu.
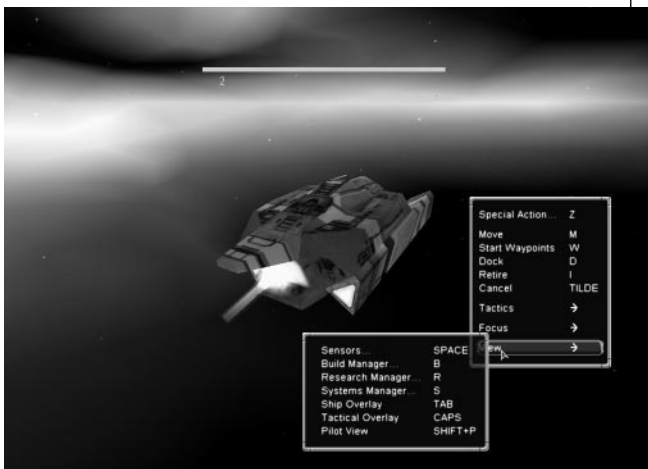
The menu has many options that enable you to control the selected ships. Movement, formations, tactics, and other commands can all be set via these options.
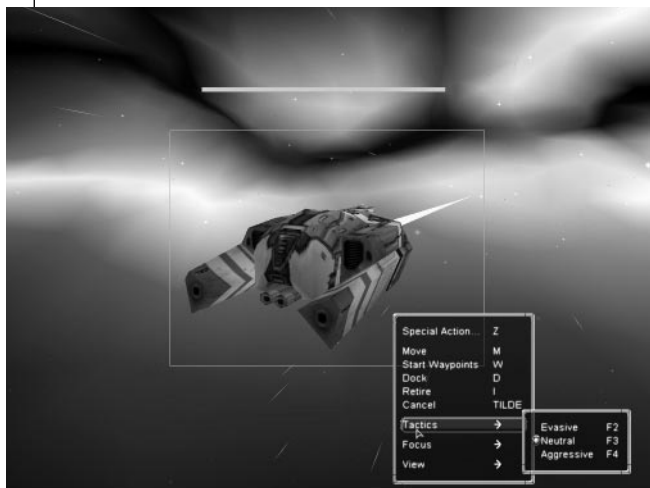
In the <VIEW> section of the right-click menu, you can access the manager screens (build, research, systems, and sensors) and turn on/off ship overlay, tactical overlay, and pilot view.

All right-click menu options have hotkey equivalents. These hotkeys can be changed via the key binding settings in the option menu.

Special Action...	Z
Move	M
Start Waypoints	W
Dock	D
Retire	I
Cancel	TILDE
Tactics	→
Focus	→
View...	→

Sensors...	SPACE
Build Manager...	B
Research Manager...	R
Systems Manager...	S
Ship Overlay	TAB
Tactical Overlay	CAPS
Pilot View	SHIFT+P

CAMERA CONTROLS

Rotating
Hold down the right mouse button and drag the mouse.

Zooming
Hold down the left and right mouse buttons and drag the mouse forward or backward. OR: If you are using a mouse with a wheel, this can be used to zoom as well..

Focusing
Select a ship and press the middle mouse button or the [F] key.
NOTE: Issuing the focus command a second time will make the camera zoom in as close as possible.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <ON SELECTED> in the <FOCUS> section.

Focus on Ships in View
Press [ALT]+[F] keys. This focuses on all of your ships in the viewable area.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <ON SHIPS IN VIEW> in the <FOCUS> section.

Focus on Command Ship
Press the [HOME] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <ON COMMAND SHIP> in the <FOCUS> section.

Focus on Event
Press the [ENTER] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <ON EVENT> in the <FOCUS> section.

ALT Focusing
To focus on a ship without selecting it, hold down the [ALT] key and left-click on it.

Cancel Focus
Press the [DELETE] key. If you wish to go back to a focus you have cancelled, press the [INSERT] key.
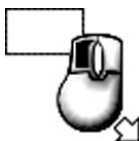
SHIP SELECTION

All selection can be done in both the main view and in sensors manager.

Selecting
Place mouse pointer over desired ship and click the left mouse button to select it. NOTE: If you left-click on a group of ships in formation, the first left-click will select them all, and a second left-click will select just that ship. Also, if you have different types of ships selected, you can left-click to select any ship type from the ships selected list in the top right of the screen.

Drag Selecting
Hold down the left mouse button and drag a box around the desired ships.

Selecting Everything
Press the [E] key.

De-Selecting
Left-click on empty space or press the [ESC] key.

Shift Selecting
To add ships to the selection, hold down [SHIFT] and click the left mouse button on the desired ship(s). It's also possible to hold down [SHIFT] and then drag-select the desired ship(s).
NOTE: You can also hold down [SHIFT] and left-click to select multiple types of ships from the ships selected list in the top right of the screen, (if you already have different ship types selected).

Hotkey Grouping
Select the ships you wish to assign a hotkey to and then press [CTRL] + a number key (from 1-9). You may then select that group at any time, regardless of where you are, simply by pressing its hotkey number. Pressing it again will focus the camera on the ship(s) in that hotkey group.

Adding Ships to a Hotkey Group
Select the hotkey group with its number key and then use "Shift Selecting" to add ship(s) to the group. Once this is done, reassign the entire group to the hotkey number with the "Hotkey Grouping" command.

MOVEMENT

All movement can be done in the main view and sensors manager.
Horizontal Movement
Select a ship or group of ships and then press the [M] key. This will bring up the movement disk. Simply move the mouse pointer to where you wish to go and click the left mouse button to issue the move order.
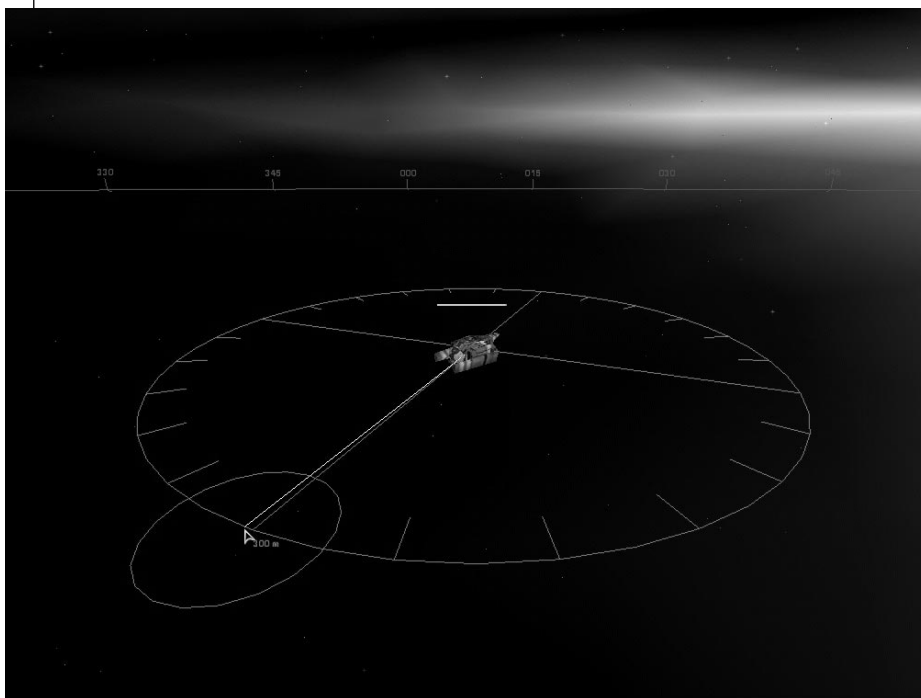
3D Movement

With the movement disk up, hold down [SHIFT] and drag the mouse to add elevation to your destination. As before, clicking the left mouse button will issue the move order. NOTE: To cancel vertical movement and return the movement disk to horizontal mode, press [CTRL]+[SHIFT].
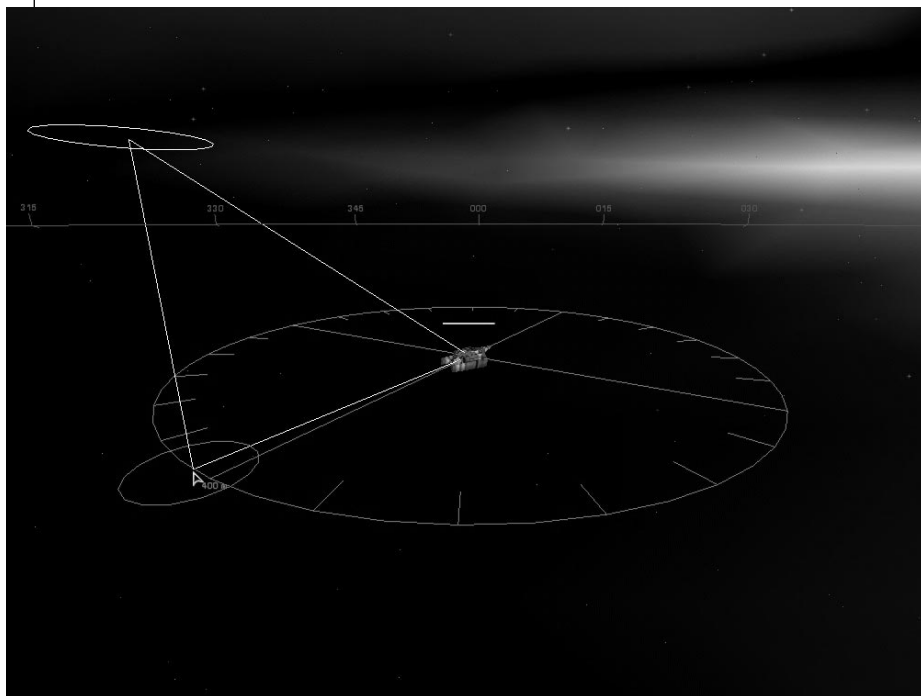
Moving in Sensors Manager

Like most other commands, movement can be done in the Sensors Manager. This is very useful when moving long distances. Call up the Sensors Manager by pressing the [SPACE] key. Then use the [M] key to bring up the movement disk and issue your move command, just as you would in the main game view.
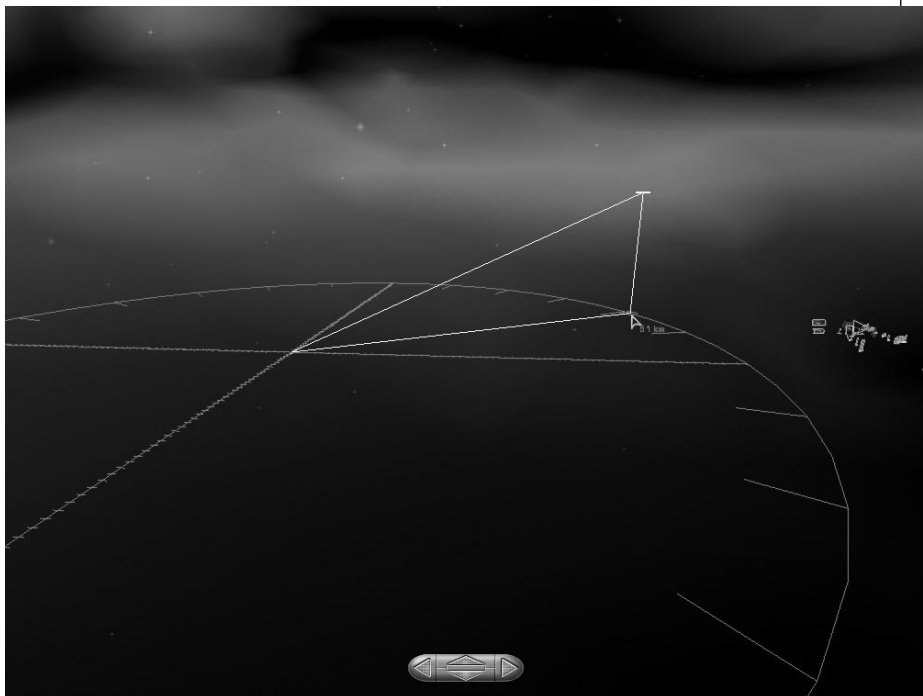
Waypoints

Waypoints are very useful for directing ships around enemy forces or setting up patrol routes. To start setting waypoints, select some ships, and select the right-click menu option <START WAYPOINTS>.
OR: Select some ships and press [W].

You can now place each waypoint by pressing the left mouse button at the desired location. You can use the [SHIFT] key to change vertical elevation of each waypoint, just as you would for a move command.
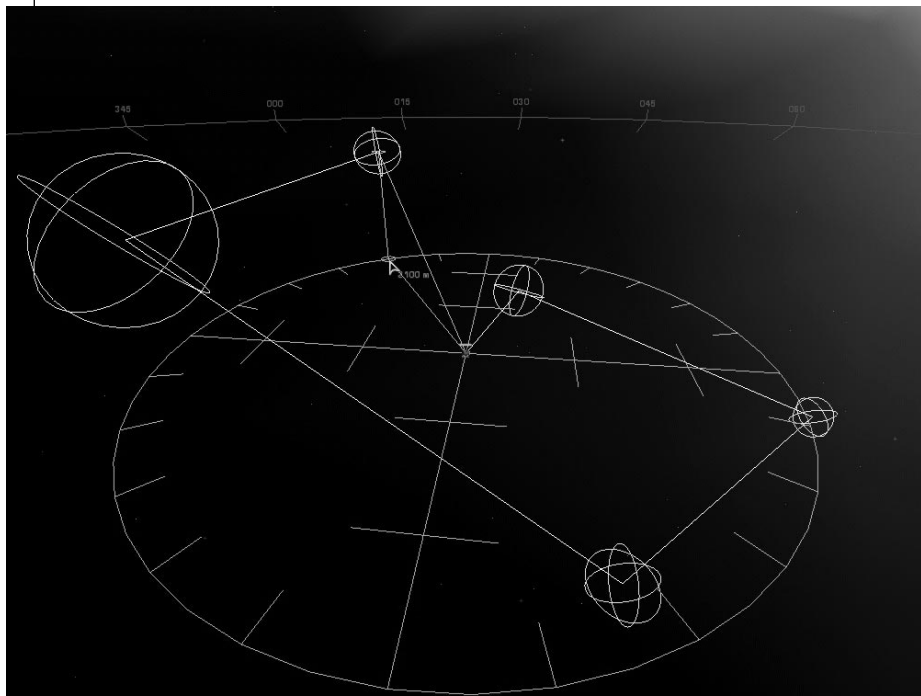
You can then finish placing waypoints by selecting the <END WAYPOINTS> option in the right-click menu. OR: By pressing the [W] key again.
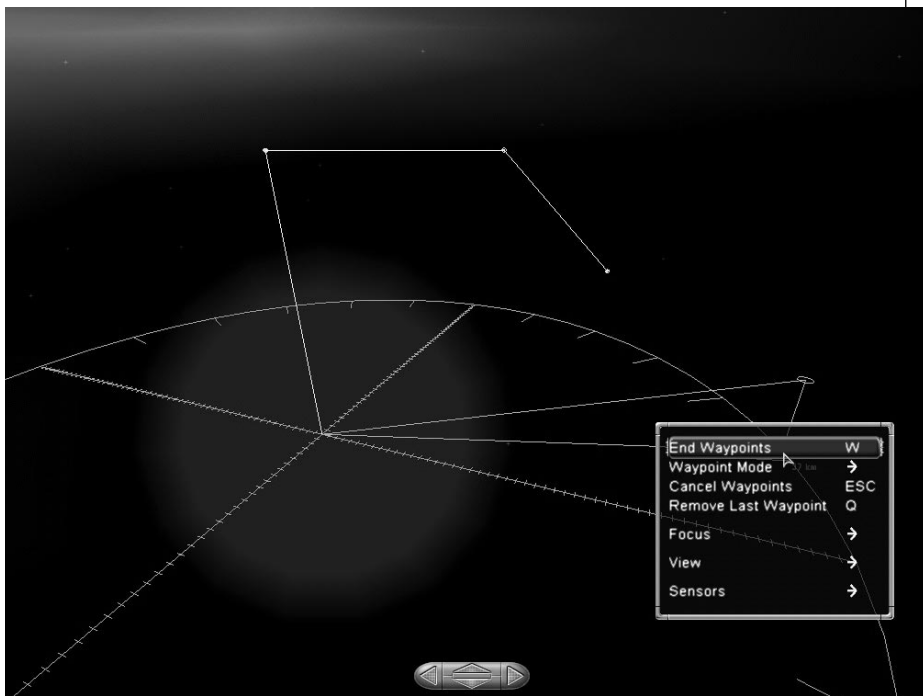
Waypoints have 3 modes that can be set via the right-click menu while placing waypoints, or with the following hotkeys:

[SHIFT]+[Q] . . . . .Linear
[SHIFT]+[W] . . . . .Circular
[SHIFT]+[E] . . . . .End-to-End

Linear mode will make the ships go to the end of the path and stop. Circular mode will make the ships continuously follow the path in a circular fashion, while End-to-End mode will ping-pong the ships from one end of the path to the other. Use Circular and End-to-End waypoint paths in conjunction with aggressive tactics to set up effective patrols that require little management.

COMBAT

Attacking

Move the mouse pointer over an enemy ship and click the left mouse button. NOTE: It is possible that the attack icon will be replaced with a context sensitive special action icon. This does not mean that a left-click will not attack, it just indicates that a right-click will perform a special action on that target with the ships that you currently have selected, rather than bringing up the right-click menu.

Group Attacking

Hold down [CTRL] and drag a box around the targets with the left mouse button.

Force Attacking

Hold down [CTRL]+[SHIFT] and left-click on or bandbox the target(s). NOTE: Force attacking can be used to attack asteroids and your own ships if necessary.

Moving While Attacking

Capital ships have a special ability to move while keeping their weapons bearing on an enemy ship. To do this, give the Capital ship its attack order and then give it a movement order. The ship will move and continue to attack until it is out of range of its target(s).

FORMATIONS AND TACTICS

Setting Formations

To set a formation, select the desired ships and bring up the right-click menu. From the <FORMATION> section, you can choose one of seven formations.

OR: Formations also can be cycled through by pressing the [<] and [>] keys.

OR: Formations can be accessed directly via the F-keys:

F5	Delta
F6	Broad
F7	X
F8	Claw
F9	Wall
F10	Sphere
F11	Custom

Custom Formation

Custom formation lets you create your own formations. To create a custom formation, move your ships into the desired position, select them all, then select <CUSTOM> from the right-click menu or press [F11].

Military Parade Formation

When you build ships, they come out of your Mothership or Carrier and go into Military Parade formation with that ship. Frigates, corvettes, and fighters will go back into parade formation after docking with a Carrier or Mothership.

Delta

The standard flat triangle formation can organize groups of Strike Craft into effective squadrons, but it lacks the flexibility and firepower concentration available to more three-dimensional formations.
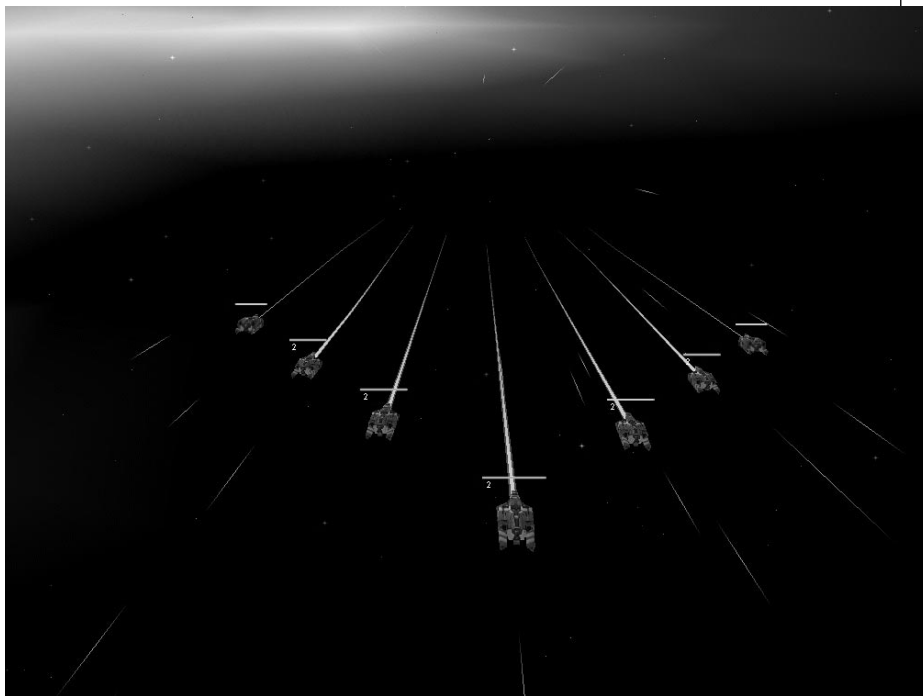
Broad

This flattened line is not effective for Strike Craft, as it disperses their firepower. It is more useful for squadrons of Capital ships, where quick identification and selection of units is as important as concentrating firepower. It is a useful formation to approach in, if you are planning to break ships off to strike at specific targets once the battle is joined.

✕

The flying X formation is an excellent Strike Craft formation, concentrating a large number of vessels into a relatively small three-dimensional space. Its only drawback is that the dense formation makes individual ships vulnerable to slow turret fire, which they might otherwise avoid if they were more widely dispersed.
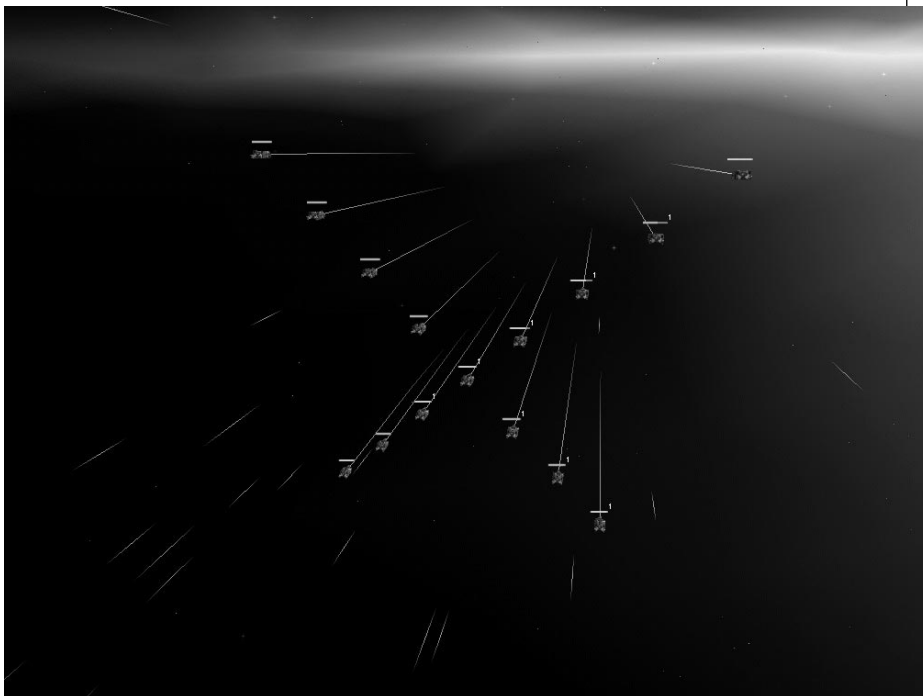
Claw

Like its namesake in nature, this formation is deadly when striking out at an individual target. The claw is a superb formation for Strike Craft when they are targeting a Capital Ship. The four curving lines of Fighters make concentrating firepower and envelopment deadly efficient. The only drawback is identifying and selecting single ships inside this complex formation.

Wall

Most effective for Capital Ships, the wall formation allows larger vessels to concentrate firepower without dangerously crowding each other. The wall is not a subtle formation, but gives large groups of big ships an effective attack mode.

Sphere

This is the deadliest of all formations, in terms of continuous firepower. Ships in this formation lose their ability to perform complex flight maneuvers, but gain the ability to constantly fire at targets from every angle. This is also an effective guarding formation, as it puts the vessel to be protected in the center of the sphere.
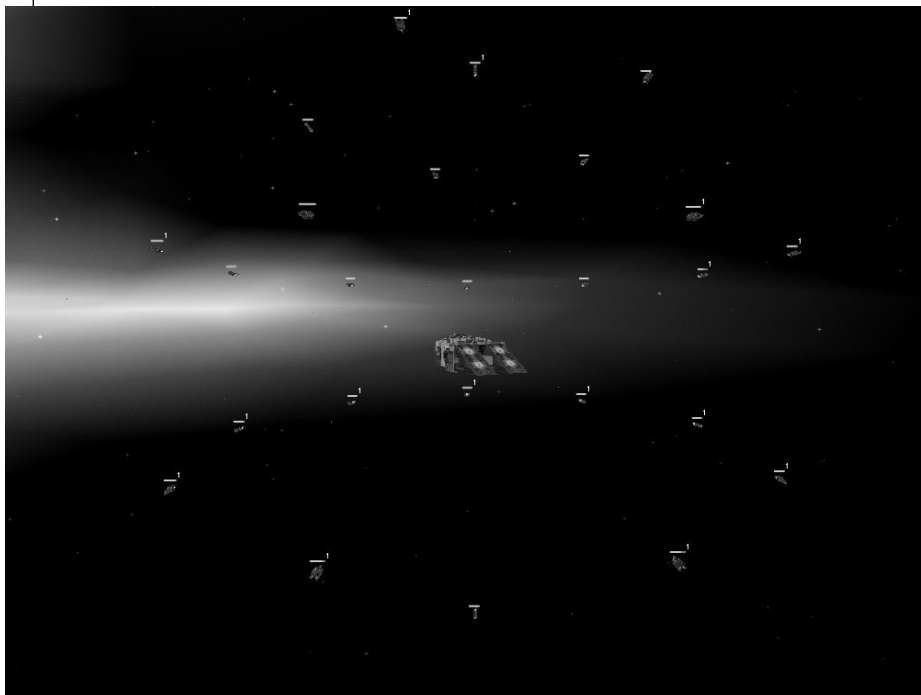
Setting Tactics

To change the tactics setting, select the desired ships and bring up the right-click menu. From the <TACTICS> section you can choose one of three settings: Evasive, Neutral or Aggressive. The tactics setting can be increased using the] key and decreased using the [key.

OR: Tactics can be accessed directly via the F-keys:
F2   Evasive
F3   Neutral
F4   Aggressive

Evasive Tactics

Evasive ships will not maintain formation when attacking, and thus are less likely to be hit by fire intended for nearby wingmen. Evasive ships will also flee enemies that are attacking them, unless instructed specifically to attack certain ships. Even when instructed to attack, an evasive ship will abort the attack if damaged severely and return to dock for repairs at the nearest Carrier or Mothership. NOTE: Certain large ships cannot be set to evasive, as they are too slow to flee enemies and/or cannot dock for repairs due to their size (Motherships, Carriers, Dreadnoughts, Heavy Cruisers, Destroyers, and Processors).

Neutral Tactics

This is the normal stance for ships. Strike Craft set to neutral will perform evasive maneuvers while attacking enemy ships, but will maintain specified formations. If no orders are issued and enemies are within weapons range, ships in neutral will fire from their current position, but will not engage in full combat. All ships that have just been built are launched with neutral tactics.

Aggressive Tactics

When ships are set to aggressive tactics, they will automatically attack any enemies within weapons range and attack them until they or their enemies are destroyed. Aggressive ships on patrol will return to the patrol route after they have destroyed any enemies they encounter. Commands (other than attack) issued to aggressive ships while they are in the midst of battle will drop them to neutral tactics, so that they can leave the battle and perform the command issued.w

OTHER COMMANDS

Upgrade (U key)

Select the ship(s) that you want to upgrade and then press the [U] key.
OR: Select the ship(s) you wish to upgrade, call up the right-click menu, and select the <UPGRADE> option. This option will not be present if none of the ships selected can be upgraded.

Ships that can upgrade will have a solid blinking yellow circle to the right of their health bar when selected. Ships can only be upgraded when certain technologies are researched.

Strike craft will automatically dock when instructed to upgrade, while larger ships can upgrade wherever they are. When larger ships are instructed to upgrade, a tan colored bar will appear below their health bar; this represents the progress of the upgrade. Ships cannot do anything else while they are upgrading.

Dock (D key)

Select the desired ship(s) and then right-click on the vessel you wish to dock with. A ship will only dock with a vessel that has docking bays (the dock icon will be visible when the mouse pointer is over it). NOTE: Some large ships cannot dock (Mothership, Carriers, Destroyers, Dreadnoughts, Heavy Cruisers, and Processors)
OR: Bring up the right-click menu and select the <DOCK> command. This will cause the selected ship(s) to dock with the nearest capable vessel.
OR: Press the [D] key. This will instruct your ships to dock with the nearest capable vessel.

Retire (I key)

Select the ships you wish to retire, call up the right-click menu, and select <RETIRE>. The selected ships will dock and retire with the nearest capable vessel. Once docked, resource units representing a portion of the value of that ship will be added to your total. Only ships that can dock can be retired.

Hyperspace (J key)

This command allows Capital Ships to perform hyperspace jumps. Just select the ships you wish to hyperspace, bring up the right-click menu and select the <HYPERSPACE> command. The Sensors Manager and movement disk will be brought up automatically. Left-click to set the hyperspace destination. The cost of the hyperspace jump will be displayed near your cursor. If this cost turns red, you don't have enough Resource Units to make the jump.

Cancel Orders (~ key)

Select the desired ship(s), bring up the right-click menu and select the <CANCEL ORDERS> command.
OR: Select the desired ship(s) and press the [~] key.

Guard (G key)

Select the ships that you wish to put on guard duty, then hold down the [G] key and left-click on or left bandbox the target(s) that you wish to guard. Ships will only move as fast as the minimum velocity of any ship guarding it.

Harvest (H key)

Select a Worker, move the mouse pointer over any resource and click the right mouse button.
OR: Bring up the right-click menu and select the <HARVEST> command. This will cause the Worker to begin harvesting the nearest resource.
OR: Press the [H] key. This will also make the Worker find the nearest resource.
OR: Hold down the [Z] key and left-click on or left bandbox resources.

To harvest crystals, your Workers must be upgraded with salvage technology and your Command Ship (or Carrier or Processor) must be upgraded with crystal harvesting technology. Instruct your Workers to salvage the crystal (see special actions section below). It takes 2 Workers to tow a small crystal and 4 Workers to tow a large crystal. Once a sufficient number of Workers have latched on to the crystal, it will be towed back to the nearest crystal processing capable ship. If you do not have a ship with the crystal harvesting upgrade, then you will not be able to issue a salvage command on a crystal.

Kamikaze (K key)

After giving a ship normal attack orders press the [K] key. Only Strike Craft can kamikaze.

Scuttle (SHIFT + S key)

Press the [SHIFT]+[S] keys once you have selected the ship(s) you wish to self-destruct. NOTE: You must issue the scuttle command twice to confirm this unusual order.

Ship Overlay (TAB key)

Press the [TAB] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <SHIP OVERLAY> in the <VIEW> section.

Tactical Overlay (CAPS LOCK key)

Press the [CAPS LOCK] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <TACTICAL OVERLAY> in the <VIEW> section.

Pilot View (Shift key + P key)

Select one ship, then press [SHIFT]+[P] key. Your view is now that of the pilot. To return to regular view, simply press [SHIFT]+[P] again.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <PILOT VIEW> in the <VIEW> section.

Pause (P key)

Press the [P] key at any time during gameplay to pause the game. NOTE: The camera is still fully active (including focusing) while the game is paused, but no game commands can be issued.

Special Actions

You can call up a special action menu for your currently selected ships at any time by pressing the [Z] key. Left-click on your choice of action in this menu. If a target is needed for the chosen action, then the closest valid target will be selected.
OR: Select the <SPECIAL ACTION> option in the right-click menu to call up the special action menu.
If you want to choose a specific target, hold down the [Z] key while left-clicking on or left bandboxing the

desired target(s). A menu will pop up and you can choose which action to perform by left-clicking on it. Invalid targets chosen for that action will be ignored. NOTE: Whenever choosing an action from the menu that pops up, you will notice as your mouse pointer moves over each entry that the ships in your current selection which can perform that action will have a box drawn around them. This is useful when you have various types of ships selected.

OR: Place the mouse pointer over a desired target. An icon representing an available special action for your currently selected ships will appear below the mouse pointer. You can now right-click to perform that action (provided you haven't disabled right-click context sensitive commands in the gameplay options).

Some ships do not gain the ability to perform certain special actions until they have been upgraded. For example: a Worker cannot repair other ships until an engineering module has been built, repair technology has been researched, and the Worker has been upgraded.

Some ships can perform more than one special action, and some ships have various modes for their special action, which can be set in the special action menu that pops up when you press the [Z] key.

Below is a quick reference list of special actions for each ship. A more detailed explanation of each special action is given afterward.

Somtaaw Ships

Recon	None
Leech	Leech
Sentinel	Shield
Acolyte	Link
ACV	Unlink, EMP
Mimic	Link, Mimic
MCV	Unlink, Mimic
Ramming Frigate	Ram
Multi-Beam Frigate	None
Hive Frigate	Swarm
Destroyer	None
Dreadnought	Repulse
Carrier	None
Worker	Harvest, Repair, Salvage
Processor	None
Mothership	Siege Cannon

Beast Ships

Recon	None
Sentinel	Shield
Acolyte	Link
ACV	Unlink, EMP
Interceptor	None
Cloaked Fighter	Cloak
Attack Bomber	None
Heavy Corvette	None
Multi-Gun Corvette	None
Missile Corvette	None
Cruise Missile	None
Ramming Frigate	Ram
Multi-Beam Frigate	None
Hive Frigate	Swarm
Ion Array Frigate	Cloak
DFG Frigate	None
Heavy Cruiser	Infect
Carrier	Infect
Worker	Harvest, Repair, Salvage
Processor	None
Mothership	Infect

Repair

When instructed to repair, a Worker will fly within range of the closest target chosen and begin repairing it. If none of the targets are damaged, the Worker will remain close to the ships and repair them if they do become damaged.

Leech

When instructed to leech, a Leech will clamp onto a target's hull. It will then do one of three things:

1) Spy. Harmless to enemy ship, but enables owner of leech to see what the enemy is up to.
2) Vent. Slowly damage enemy ship by eating though hull and dumping waste into space. Will continue to do this until the enemy ship is destroyed.
3) Leech. Slowly damage enemy ship by eating through hull, but return gathered material to nearest Mothership, Carrier, or Processor for resource unit (RU) gain. After dropping off material, it will return to the same target to gather more material (RUs). Once the enemy has been reduced to near destruction, the Leech will stop damaging that ship and jump to a new target, or return gathered material and go into military parade formation.

The mode of leeching can be controlled via the special action menu that pops up after pressing the [Z] key (with a Leech currently selected).

Shield

When instructed to shield a specific target, the selected Sentinels will attempt to form a sphere around the target. 12 Sentinels are needed to form a complete sphere. All 12 Sentinels must be upgraded with at least Force Field Level 1 technology. If less than 12 properly upgraded Sentinels are instructed to make a shield, they will try to form a sphere that favors the forward direction of the target ship. If a target is not given, Sentinels will form a wall by themselves.

The shield will not be formed until the Sentinels are close to their desired position around the target, or close to each other (when forming a wall). Once the shield is active, Sentinels cannot be controlled regularly, and will remain locked in formation around the target. To regain control of the Sentinels, select them, open the special action menu and select the <UNLINK FORCE FIELD> option. The Sentinels can now be controlled again.
Sentinels have 3 different levels of effectiveness. When they are upgraded to Force Field Level 3, the shield they generate will be able to withstand a lot more firepower than Level 1 shields. Each Sentinel that is involved in forming a shield has a blue bar beneath its health when selected, which represents how strong their part of the shield is. As soon as this bar reaches nothing, that part of the shield will collapse and the Sentinel will be vulnerable to enemy fire until it can recharge and reform its part of the shield.

Link

Select 2 or more Acolytes or Mimics that have been upgraded with linking technology. As many pairs of valid ships in your selection as possible will move together and link to form either ACV or MCV pairs (depending on whether Acolytes or Mimics were involved). If you notice ships having difficulty linking, it might be due to nearby ships that are interfering with their maneuvers. Simply move the interfering ships away and the linking process will continue unimpaired. It is also advisable to avoid linking ships while in the heat of battle, as enemy ships and weapons fire will impede the linking process.

Unlink

Select any ACVs or MCVs and issue this command. ACVs will separate into 2 Acolytes and MCVs will separate into 2 Mimics.

EMP

The EMP command can be issued on EMP-upgraded ACVs in two ways. You can use Z left-click, Z left bandbox, or a context sensitive right mouse click to choose a target; you can also issue an EMP command via the right-click menu <EMP> option or hotkey.

If a target is chosen, the selected ACVs will move within range and discharge an EMP blast that will stun the target. The length of time that the enemy ship is stunned depends on the number of ACVs involved in the attack and the size of the target. 10 ACVs will give the EMP blast its maximum effect.

If a target is not chosen, the selected ACVs will fire an EMP blast immediately if at least one valid target is within range.

An ACV must recharge its EMP weapon. This recharge time is represented by a blue bar below its health, when selected. An ACV cannot be involved in an EMP attack if this bar is not full.

Mimic

Mimics and MCVs can holographically emulate the appearance of friendly ships, enemy ships, and asteroids.

You can choose which category to mimic via the special action menu <SELECT MIMIC> section. This section has a list of all players and an asteroid category. Left-click on the desired choice.

After choosing a category, you can choose exactly what class of ship to emulate via the <MIMIC> section in the special action menu. This section will list all available ships that you can mimic for that category. Left-click on the desired choice.

The Mimic or MCV will now transform into the ship or asteroid selected. If you initiated the mimic operation outside of the visible space for that enemy, you can now infiltrate their forces without detection, unless they have a Recon or Sentinel nearby that has Advanced Sensors. Small dots above the health bar for the Mimic or MCV represent which players that ship is currently stealthy with. If the first dot on the left is green, then the ship is capable of infiltrating player 1's fleet. If the third dot is red, then player 3's fleet is aware that this ship is an enemy. In single player, you are player 1 and any enemy in the current mission is player 2.

When a Mimic or MCV emulates an asteroid, enemy Workers that do not have Recons or Sentinels nearby with advanced sensors will treat the fake asteroids as real ones. Once they get close, the Mimic will kamikaze into the Worker, doing substantial damage. This damage is increased if the Mimic or MCV has been upgraded with Quantum Explosive Charges.

Mimics can emulate corvettes and all classes smaller, while MCVs can emulate frigates and all classes smaller.

Ram

Ramming frigates are capable of ramming other ships, both to cause damage and to push them away from a battle. Once instructed to ram, a Ramming Frigate will move into position and then make its attack run.

Once it collides with the target, it will remain locked onto the victim until it has pushed it for approximately 20 seconds, after which it will disengage to recharge its engines. After recharging, it will reposition itself for another attack run and ram again. While pushing an enemy ship, the Ramming Frigate will also engage a cutting torch weapon to inflict damage on the hull.

A Ramming Frigate's effectiveness is greatly improved once it has been upgraded with Afterburner technology (in multiplayer, you cannot build Ramming Frigates unless you have researched Afterburner technology). A Ramming Frigate's cutting torch is also more effective once upgraded with Advanced Ion Cannon technology.

It is possible to ram crystals, thus pushing them around and/or destroying them.

Ramming is a very effective way to take large, dangerous enemies away from your fleet, where they can be attacked without the support of their escorts.

Swarm

Hive Frigates are equipped with 6 swarmers, which can be launched to attack enemy ships. These Swarmers are small fighter craft; that continue to attack enemy ships until instructed to return to the Hive Frigate (via [SHIFT]+[TILDE]) or until the enemy is destroyed. Swarmers are very fast, able to evade most projectile fire. Their size also makes it impossible for energy weapons to track them.

If a Swarmer is destroyed, a new one will be constructed within the Hive Frigate and launched immediately.

Note that it is possible to attack a target with the Hive Frigate's conventional weapons while its Swarmers are attacking another target entirely.

Repulse

Once upgraded, a Dreadnought can emit a repulse blast that will push and slightly damage enemy ships nearby. Once fired, the repulse blast expands in a sphere from the Dreadnought. This weapon is capable of taking out small craft, but is intended to push larger enemies away and give the Dreadnought time to maneuver and bring its weapons to bear.

Salvage

Once upgraded, Workers can be instructed to salvage both enemy ships and derelicts. Enemy ships must be substantially damaged before they can be salvaged. If the ship chosen for salvage is not sufficiently damaged, a message will be sent indicating this, and the Workers will wait nearby until that ship is damaged enough to begin a salvage operation.

Usually, more than one Worker is needed to salvage a ship. Frigates usually require 2, destroyers 4, and heavy cruisers 5. Strike craft cannot be salvaged, as they are too maneuverable, even when damaged. During multiplayer games, a Beast player can only salvage those ships that it can infect, while a Somtaaw player can only salvage either Somtaaw ships or Beast ships that were once Somtaaw.

Salvaged ships must be supported just like any other ship, so it is possible to be denied the opportunity to salvage if you do not have enough Support Units available to support the vessel. If this is the case, a message will be displayed when you issue a salvage command.

Crystals are harvested by instructing Workers to salvage them. Once the Workers tow them to a ship that has been upgraded with Crystal Harvesting technology, they are processed for rapid Resource Unit gain. If you do not have a ship upgraded with Crystal Harvesting technology, you will not be able to salvage a crystal.

Cloak

Beast Ion Array Frigates and Beast Cloaked Fighters can cloak at any time, provided they have enough energy (indicated by the blue bar beneath the ship's health bar). Once cloaked, they cannot be seen by enemy forces unless an enemy Recon or Sentinel with Advanced Sensors is nearby. They must also de-cloak to fire their weapons. While cloaked, their energy will slowly drain. Once their energy runs out, the ship will automatically de-cloak.

Siege Cannon

This special action is only available to Somtaaw Command Ships. To fire the cannon, select your command ship and use the special action key [Z] or use the right click menu.

Once you have built a Siege Cannon module on your Command Ship, and it has been fully charged (indicated by the blue bar beneath the Command Ship's health), you can issue this command.

The Sensors Manager will be brought up immediately, and you can move the mouse pointer around to choose the target area for the weapon. You cannot specifically target ships with this weapon, but rather the area of space they occupy. The Siege Cannon does have a maximum range, and its effectiveness and accuracy decrease the farther the blast must travel. Once you have chosen your target area in the Sensors Manager, press the left mouse button. You will be returned to the game view and the Command Ship will begin maneuvering to fire the weapon. Once in position, you will see the weapon discharge; and the outgoing blast will ping in the Sensors Manager for all to see. Once the fireball is near your targeted area, a huge shock-wave will be emitted, causing damage to almost everything in sight. You cannot fire again until the weapon has recharged.

Infect

This special action is only available to Beast Command Ships, Beast Heavy Cruisers, and Beast Carriers. Once upgraded, these ships can take over most enemy ships by infecting them with the Beast virus. To infect enemy ships, select your Beast command ship, heavy cruiser or carrier. Use the special action key or right click menu. Select infect. An infected ship becomes owned and controlled by the player that issued the infection attack. If a target is chosen that cannot be infected, or cannot be supported due to limited Support Units, damage will be inflicted instead. If a target is out of range, the ship will move within range before firing. If a target is not chosen, the closest enemy ship will be targeted for infection.

The infection attack is crucial to a Beast player's ability to acquire technology that it cannot research initially on its own. Once a ship has been captured, it can then be retired, and all technologies associated with that ship and its current upgrades will be available for research by the Beast Command Ship. Any time a ship is captured which possesses new technology—technology which the Beast has not yet acquired—a message will be displayed announcing this fact. You should immediately protect that captured ship and retire it.

Multiplayer Controls

Sending a Chat Message

Press [T] and then type in your message. Press [RETURN] when done. A small number of commands are active only during multiplayer battles. These are used to interact with other players:

Sending a Private Chat Message

Press [T] and then type [/<playername>] to specify who to send it to. After typing a few letters, the computer will automatically finish the name for you.

Forming Alliances

Call up the right-click menu and select <FORM ALLIANCE> option. You can then choose with whom you want to form the alliance.

Breaking Alliances

Call up the right-click menu and select <BREAK ALLIANCE> option. You can then choose with whom you want to break the alliance.

Transferring Resource Units (RUs)

Call up the right-click menu and select <TRANSFER RU> option. You can then choose with whom you want to transfer RUs. After this is done, a prompt will appear at the top of the screen. Type in the number of RUs to transfer and press [ENTER].

Overlays

The gameplay screen has numerous overlays that convey information to the player about the game in text and graphic form. The gameplay overlays have three different modes of verbosity, which can be cycled via the [V] key. The default mode displays all information, the second mode displays most of it, and the third mode displays none of it. Some information is only displayed in multiplayer, and some only in single player.

Player Legend (multiplayer only): This lists each player in the game and displays the colors of their ships.

Build Progress: This shows the progress of all ships currently being built. The number in brackets represents the number of ships of that type remaining to be built.

Research Progress: This shows the progress of all technology currently being researched.

Message Area: This area of the screen displays messages that inform a player of special events. Tactics and formation confirmation, notification of completed modules and researched technologies, and multiplayer messages from other players are all displayed here. Also, if you are ever in doubt as to why you can't do something, look to this area for a message explaining the problem. For example, if you try to EMP an enemy ship, but the selected ACV has not recharged yet, then a message will be displayed informing you why you cannot EMP the target.

Some messages displayed can be left-clicked to bring you to other areas of the game. For example: if you have just finished building an Engineering module for your Command Ship, you can left-click on the construction completed message to bring up the Research Manager and initiate research on a technology available on that module.

The message area has a history that you can bring up via the arrow buttons to the left of the messages. By left-clicking on the upper button, you can recall older messages that you might have missed. Clicking on the lower arrow button will return you to more recent messages.

Ships Selected List: If you have ships selected, they will be listed by type in the upper right corner of the screen. This list is especially useful for identifying smaller ships in the Sensors Manager by selecting them. Normally ships are listed in white. They are listed in gray if they are currently uncontrollable (i.e. being built, upgrading, linking, getting infected, etc), and listed in blue if they are allied (and thus uncontrollable).

Ships Selecting List: While you are dragging the mouse with the left mouse button held down, ships that are being actively selected are listed in green.

Player Information: In the lower right corner of the screen, your current Support Unit count and total, your current Resource Unit total, and current mission time elapsed are displayed. If you are currently exceeding your Support Unit capacity, your current Support Unit count (number on left) will pulse red.

Ship Selection Overlay: When you select a ship, a green health bar overlay will appear above the ship indicating how much damage the vessel has incurred. The bar will shorten as the ship is damaged and will change from   green   to yellow to red as conditions worsen. Workers have an additional brown bar that represents what percentage of Resource Unit (RU) capacity they have reached before returning to drop off a load.

Some ships have weapons that need to recharge. The recharge progress of their weapon is represented by a blue bar below the health bar. Sentinel shield strength is also represented by a blue bar.

While larger ships are upgrading, a tan-colored bar representing the progress of the upgrade will be present.

If a ship is capable of upgrading, a solid blinking yellow circle will be present to the left of the health bar.

If a ship is currently uncontrollable, a red X will be present to the right of the health bar.

Experience levels for a ship are displayed via red stars above the health bar. The more red stars, the more experienced the pilot of that ship is.

Certain ships can fire missiles. The current number of missiles available for launch is indicated by a number below the health bar.

Ship Overlay: You can turn on the ship overlay via the [TAB] key (you must have at least one ship selected). If more than one ship is selected, the overlay will show information for the first ship that was selected. The ship overlay gives you detailed information on every aspect of the ship: its experience level, current health, and available weapons. The overlay also lists all abilities that the ship is capable of developing in Multiplayer. If they are listed in red, then the associated technology for that ability has not been researched. If they are listed in yellow, then the ship can be upgraded at any time to obtain that ability. Current abilities of the ship are listed in green.

Tactical Overlay: If you turn on the tactical overlay with the [CAPS LOCK] key, a series of graphic symbols will be overlaid on all units. A symbol legend will appear in the upper left corner of the screen.

Ship Identification: Simply position the mouse pointer over a ship for a few seconds to get a short description of what the ship is. In a multiplayer game, it will also list the player that owns that ship (if it is not your own ship). You can also use this method to get the value of the various types of resources in the game.

MANAGER SCREENS

Many of the more complex tasks, like ship-building and research, have their own special screens to help you manage them more effectively. They can be accessed at any time and any place during combat by hitting the appropriate command key. You can return to regular game view by hitting the [ESC] key. The build, research, and system managers all have buttons in the top right corner that enable easy access to one another.

Build Manager

To access the build manager, select the ship with which you wish to build, and then press the [B] key.

OR: Select the ship with which you wish to build, call up the right-click menu and select <BUILD MANAGER> from the <VIEW> section.

OR: If you have the SHORTCUT BUTTONS enabled in the gameplay options, select the ship with which you wish to build, then left-click on the BUILD button at the bottom center of the screen.

The build manager allows you to build ships and set up the construction queue in order to build many units at once. The build manager also gives basic details of each type of ship presently available for construction, as well as your current number of resource units.

Building: All the ships your current tech levels allow you to build are listed in the left side panel. Left-click on the desired vessel with the left mouse button and its image and basic performance details will appear in the right side window. Left-click again to add units to the production queue. When you are done adding units, left-click on the <BUILD> button.

Build Progress: At this point, two colored bars will appear above the listing for the ship type you have just ordered built. The top line shows how close to completion a single vessel is, while the lower bar shows how close to completion the entire build order is. If you only ordered one vessel built, these two bars will move along together.

Canceling a Build: To cancel a build, left-click on the type of ship being built and then left-click on the <CANCEL BATCH> button. The RU's used in construction will be reclaimed.

BUILD MANAGER — Kuun-Lan

	RESEARCH
	SYSTEMS

CURRENT RU'S	1839

AVAILABLE SHIPS	QUEUE	COST
FIGHTER CLASS		
RECON	◁ 4 ▷	40
ACOLYTE	◁ 14 ▷	75
CORVETTE CLASS		
ACV	◁ 0 ▷	150
FRIGATE CLASS		
RAMMING FRIGATE	◁ 0 ▷	650
NON-COMBAT CLASS		
WORKER	◁ 0 ▷	500
PROCESSOR	◁ 0 ▷	680
COMPONENT CLASS		
HANGAR MODULE	◁ 0 ▷	1250

SUPPORT UNITS

ACOLYTE
COST: 75 RUs

TOTAL SHIPS/COST:	18	1164

INFO ?

BUILD	PAUSE BATCH	CANCEL BATCH	CLOSE

Pausing a Build: To pause a build, left-click on its progress bar and then left-click on the <PAUSE BATCH> button. When you are ready for the project to resume, simply re- select the ship type and then left-click on the <PAUSE BATCH> button again. Construction will resume exactly where it left off.

Support Units (SU): Your Command Ship can only support a certain amount of ships. This limit is represented by the bar in the middle of the Build Manager. The bottom green section represents how many SU's you are currently using. The middle dark section represents how many SU's you have reserved with the ships that are currently queued for construction. The top gray section represents how many SU's you will have remaining after construction is complete. You can increase the total SU's available to you by building more support modules on your command ship or by building more carriers (and more support modules on those carriers).

Build Capable Ship Icons: These icons represent the vessels in your fleet that can build ships. Only your Command Ship and Carrier Ships can perform this function. For each ship an icon is drawn to the right of your current RU total. You can left-click on these icons to view and set what they are currently building.

Ship Information: For more information on a ship, select it by left-clicking it once. Then toggle the ship information on by left-clicking the INFO button in the lower right corner.

Research Manager

To access the research manager press the [R] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <RESEARCH MANAGER> from the <VIEW> section.
OR: If you have the SHORTCUT BUTTONS enabled in the gameplay options, you can left-click on the RESEARCH button at the bottom center of the screen.

Researching a Technology: Double-click on the technology you wish to research.
OR: Left-click on the <RESEARCH> button.

Canceling Research: Select the technology currently being researched from the left panel list and left-click on the <CLEAR LAB> button found along the bottom of the manager. You can also halt research in a particular lab ship by selecting it from the icon strip in the middle of the manager and then left-clicking on the <CLEAR LAB> button. When a project is canceled, all accumulated research in it is lost.

Technology List: This panel contains a list of technologies you can currently research. When a technology has been selected, a graphic will appear in the right-hand side panel. Technologies that have already been successfully researched will appear on the list with a green dot beside them.

RESEARCH MANAGER

BUILD

SYSTEMS

GENETICS MODULE
SUPPORT SYSTEMS
BEAST INFECT WEAPON
CRYSTAL HARVEST ABILITY
RECON
ADVANCED SENSORS
WORKER
SALVAGING ABILITY
PROCESSOR
CRYSTAL HARVEST ABILITY
INTERCEPTOR
FIGHTER DRIVE
CLOAKED FIGHTER
FIGHTER DRIVE
CLOAKING ABILITY
ATTACK BOMBER
FIGHTER DRIVE
PLASMA BOMB LAUNCHER
CRUISE MISSILE

INFO

RESEARCH   CLEAR LAB   CLOSE

A Somtaaw player must have research modules built before researching any technologies. Once a module has been built, you can see the status of any research you are performing in that module via a blue bar under the technology name in the left display list and via the icons in the middle of the research manager. A Somtaaw player can research one technology per module.

A Beast player does not need research modules, and can choose to research any technology for ships that it has captured. To capture a ship, infect it and then retire it. For directions on infecting, view the description of the Beast Command Ship. Once retired, a new category for that ship will appear in the technology list, with all technologies associated with that ship listed. You can then choose those technologies for research. A Beast player can research only one technology at a time.

Sensors Manager

To open the Sensors Manager (SM), press the [SPACE] key.
OR: Call up the right-click menu and select <SENSORS MANAGER> from the <VIEW> section.
OR: If you have the SHORTCUT BUTTONS enabled in the gameplay options, you can left-click on the SENSORS button at the bottom center of the screen.

The sensors manager gives you a general view of the entire battlespace. Usually the best way to look at your fleet is by positioning the camera so that it is looking down on your ships. This yields a more 2D representation and usually makes it easier to select your units. The camera can be controlled in the Sensors Manager just as in the game view. In addition to regular camera controls, you can use the arrow buttons at the bottom center of the screen to pan the view forward, back, left and right. You can also select any ship in the Sensors Manager just as you would in the game view. You can issue move, attack, special action, guard, dock, hyperspace, and upgrade commands to any selected ship in the Sensors Manager.

You can focus on a selected ship via the [F] key. This will return you to the game view with the camera focused on the selected ships.

Visible enemy ships that show up as red pixels can be examined closely via the ALT FOCUS command (holding down [ALT] and left bandboxing a target).

You can exit the Sensors Manager at any time by pressing the [SPACE] key.

When opening the right-click menu in Sensors Manager, you can control which elements are displayed for the Sensors Manager via the <SENSORS> section. This enables you to tune the Sensors Manager to give you the information that you feel is important.

Area Explored: This toggles the display of the gray wireframe that represents the areas that you have explored. Resources will only be displayed once you have explored the area in which they are found (except for crystals, which are always visible).

Sensors (Sphere): This toggles the display of the blue spheres that represent the sensor range of each ship in your fleet. Enemies can only be seen if they are approximately within sensor range of your ships.

Sensors (Wireframe): This toggles the display of the blue wireframe that also represents the sensor range of each of your ships. You can use either Spheres or Wireframes to display sensor range for your ships. NOTE: If you want to maximize your frame rate, use the Wireframe option.

Resources: This toggles the display of resources. Asteroids and dust clouds are drawn as brown pixels. Nebulae are drawn with purple lines. Crystals are drawn with purple pixels.

Dust: This toggles the display of dust. Dust consists of un-harvestable particles, and is represented by gray pixels.

Background: This toggles the display of the background. NOTE: If you want to maximize your frame rate, toggle the background off.

Focus →
View →
Sensors →

Area Explored	CTRL+F1
Sensors (Sphere)	CTRL+F2
Sensors (Wireframe)	CTRL+F3
Resources	CTRL+F4
Dust	CTRL+F5
Background	CTRL+F6
Compass	CTRL+F7
Objective Pointer	CTRL+F8
Large Ship Overlay	CTRL+F9
Slipgate Paths	CTRL+F10
Ship Meshes	CTRL+F11
Pieplate Lines	CTRL+F12

Enemies Spotted (Focus)

Objectives:
INCOMPLETE - Destroy Taiidani Bombers

SU: 14 / 90
RU: 2000
00:01:35

Compass: This toggles a pie plate with numbers drawn to represent degrees from a full 360 degree circle. You can use these numbers to identify directions to allies during a multiplayer game.

Objective Pointer: This option will toggle the drawing of an arrow from objective text in the lower left during single player games to important locations in the Sensors Manager.

Large Ship Overlay: This option will toggle icons that are drawn over large ships (yours and enemies).

Slipgate Paths: This option will toggle the display of slipgate paths. They are represented as curved lines that go from one slipgate to another. You will only see the path once you have gone through the slipgate from one end to the other.

Friendly Ships: This will toggle the display of friendly ships. Your ships are represented by green pixels, while allies are represented by blue pixels.

Enemy Ships: This will toggle the display of enemy ships that are within sensor range of your ships. Enemies are represented by red pixels.

Systems Manager

To open the Systems Manager, first select a Command Ship or Carrier, then press the [S] key.
OR: Select a Command Ship or Carrier, then call up the right-click menu and select <SYSTEMS MANAGER> from the <VIEW> section.
OR: If you have the SHORTCUT BUTTONS enabled in the gameplay options, select a Command Ship or Carrier, then left-click on the SYSTEMS button at the bottom center of the screen.

The systems manager allows you to check which ships are currently docked and toggle automatic launch parameters for the selected Command Ship or Carrier. By disabling automatic launching, you can have newly built fighters and corvettes remain inside the docking bay, thus protecting them from enemies outside.

Docking Capacity: These two colored bars graphically represent the remaining capacity of the ship in green. The actual numbers of Fighters and Corvettes docked are given to the left of their respective bars. Sentinels and leeches are included in the Fighter category, while Workers are included in the Corvette category.

Selecting the Launch Vessel: If you have built any Carriers, their icons will appear here. To see which ships are docked in one these vessels, left-click on its icon from this list.

Remain Docked: Left-click on this checkbox to keep Strike Craft inside a Command Ship or Carrier when they dock.

Launch One: Left-click on the type of ship you wish to launch and then left-click on the <LAUNCH ONE> button along the bottom of the screen. Only one ship of that type will launch.

Launch Group: Left-click on the type of ship you wish to launch and then left-click on the <LAUNCH GROUP> button along the bottom of the screen.

Launch All: To launch all ships held in the bay, left-click on the <LAUNCH ALL> button.

SYSTEMS MANAGER

Kuun-Lan

FIGHTER SLOTS:
CORVETTE SLOTS:

REMAIN
DOCKED
15
0

DOCKED SHIPS:

FIGHTER CLASS
5 x RECON
10 x ACOLYTE

MODULE STATUS   REPAIR PRIORITY

HANGAR MODULE

ENGINEERING MODULE

SUPPORT MODULE

BUILD

RESEARCH

LAUNCH ONE   LAUNCH GROUP   LAUNCH ALL   CLOSE

Module Status and Repair Priority: For Somtaaw players, the right panel contains a list of modules on that Command Ship or Carrier, their current health, and a repair priority. The repair priorities can only be set once you have researched Repair Bots and upgraded that Command Ship or Carrier.

SYSTEMS MANAGER

Mothership2

BUILD

RESEARCH

EMERGENCY POWER ALLOCATION:

⊕ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ REMAIN
DOCKED

FIGHTER SLOTS: 2
CORVETTE SLOTS: 0

THRUST   ⊗

INFECTION   ⊗

DEFENSIVE WEAPONS   ⊗

RESEARCH   ⊗

BUILD   ⊗

SYSTEM DEFAULT   ⊚

DOCKED SHIPS:

FIGHTER CLASS

2 x RECON

LAUNCH ONE ▣   LAUNCH GROUP ▣   LAUNCH ALL ▣   CLOSE ⊘

Emergency Power Allocation: For Beast players, the right panel contains a list of areas that can be accelerated at the expense of the health of the Beast Command Ship. All benefits affect only the Beast Command Ship. For example, you can accelerate research, but your Command Ship will slowly lose health. Once the Command Ship has lost half of its health, the setting will automatically return to system default and health will no longer be drained.

Thrust improves Command Ship maximum speed.

Infection accelerates how fast the infection weapon will recharge on your Command Ship.

Defensive Weapons improves the damage that the Command Ship's guns will do.

Research will decrease research time for technologies.

Build will decrease the build time of ships currently under construction in your Command Ship.

SINGLEPLAYER

Starting a Game

In order to start a new single player game, left-click on the <SINGLE PLAYER> button in the Main Menu.

Save a Game: At any time during gameplay, hit the [ESC] key and then choose <SAVE GAME> from the menu. When the Save Game screen comes up, left-click in the narrow box below the save game list and type in a name for the saved game. Then left-click on the <SAVE> button.

Loading a Saved Game: Left-click on the <LOAD GAME> button. A screen will appear with a list of saved games. Cataclysm automatically saves your campaign at the beginning of every new level. These auto-saved games will appear along with the ones you have saved yourself. To load one, left-click on it and then left-click on the <LOAD> button.

Player Setup: This screen lets you set the base and secondary colors of your ships. To change your base color, left-click on the <BASE COLOR> button. A small white circle will appear inside the large rainbow box. Click and drag the circle around the rainbow box until you have achieved a shade you are satisfied with. To change the stripe color, simply left-click on the <SECONDARY COLOR> button and repeat the process of dragging the white circle to choose a stripe color. You can also drag the slider, located to the right of the rainbow box, up and down to adjust the brightness of the color.

Game Difficulty: Game difficulty affects the production time to build ships, the cost and health of ships, and enemy fleet size.

Starting The Game: When you are happy with your choice of fleet and ship color, left-click on the <START> game button to begin the Single Player campaign.

Multiplayer

Cataclysm can be played against human and computer opponents through a variety of different modes. While there are three different ways to engage in a multiplayer game of Cataclysm, they all use the same system for creating the actual game and setting up the gameplay options and rules.

Skirmish vs. CPU: This option is for playing multiplayer games against computer players. After a game is created with the desired gameplay options (see "Setting Multiplayer Game Options"), left-click on the <START> button to begin the action.

LAN (Local Area Network): This option is for playing Cataclysm on a Local Area Network. People who want to play together on a LAN must be using the same protocol.

Internet: This option is for playing Cataclysm over the Internet via Sierra.com.

LAN

After selecting the LAN option, another screen will open up. Left-click on the name field and type in the name by which you wish to be known on the multiplayer battlefield. Hit <ENTER> when you are finished typing. Left-click on the <PLAYER SETUP> if you need to change your race or ship colors from previous multiplayer sessions. Once you are satisfied, left-click on the <GO> button.

Cataclysm will auto-detect if you have IPX and/or TCP/ IP LAN and choose the appropriate protocol, so normally you will never have to touch this setting. If you have both IPX and TCP/ IP installed, Cataclysm defaults to IPX. Users who want more control and both protocols installed can select the IPX button for IPX, and the TCP/ IP button for TCP/ IP.

THE LOBBY

The lobby is where you go to see who else is on the LAN, chat, organize your own game, or see what games are still accepting players. The names of the players currently in the lobby are in the bottom right panel, and any chat messages are printed in the bottom left panel.

Chatting: If you wish to send messages to the other players in the lobby, just left-click here and type your message. If you wish to whisper a private message to just one player, type /< playername> and the rest of your message.

Creating Your Own Game: Left-click on the Create Game button. This takes you to the game setup screen.

Game Details: The list of games available in the lobby is displayed in the large upper display panel. To see which options are being used in a game, left-click on the game you are interested in and then left-click on this button.

Joining a Game: Left-click on the game you wish to join on the main list and then left-click on this button.

Player Setup: Left-click on this button to choose your fleet (Somtaaw or Beast) and to modify your ship colors.

Setting Multiplayer Game Options

The setup game screen is where you set the name of your game and the number of CPU players, as well as all the gameplay options available.

**Naming Your Game:** Click on this panel and type in a name for your game.

Number of CPU Players: Left-click on the arrows to increase or decrease the number of computer players you want in the game.

Win Conditions: These checkboxes let you set the various victory conditions for the game. Destroy Enemy

Mothership means the enemy's Mothership must be destroyed; Capture Enemy Capital Ship means you can also win by capturing an enemy capital ship. Allied Victory means that players who are allied can win the game together by defeating their enemies.

Password on the Game: If you want to restrict access to your game, left-click on the <password protected> checkbox. Left-click on the narrow panel directly below and type in the password you wish to use. Confirm your password by re-entering it in the panel below. In order for other players to join the game you created, you will have to tell them the password.
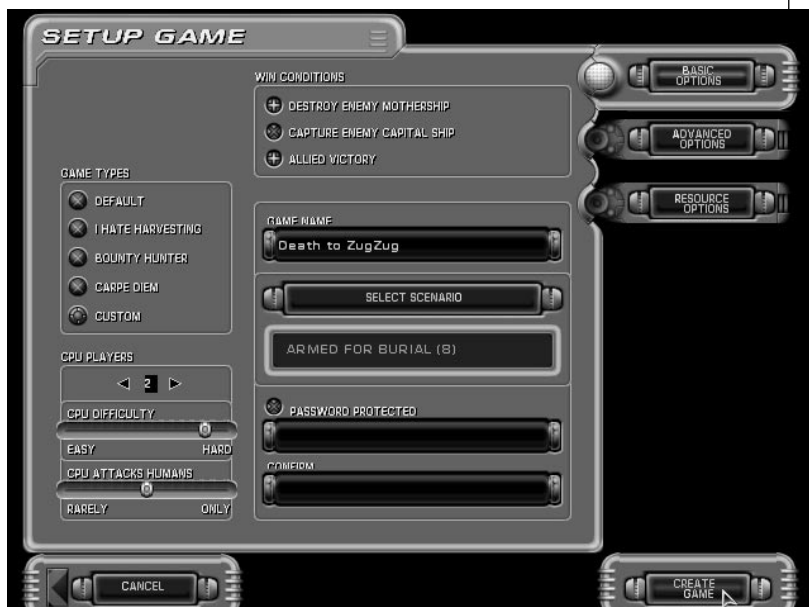
CPU Difficulty: This slider lets you set the difficulty of the computer-controlled opponents.

CPU Attacks Humans: This slider lets you set how likely the CPU player will be to attack human opponents.

Create Game:. When you are satisfied with your choices, left-click on the <CREATE GAME> button.

Game Type: Cataclysm comes with several pre-defined setups for different styles of multiplayer gaming. Selecting one of these game types changes a variety of options on all of the options screens.

I Hate Harvesting: No harvesting of resources is required in this game type. RU injections are turned on with a lump sum injection as well.

Bounty Hunter: Bounties are turned on in this game type, meaning each enemy ship you kill brings in a bounty — in RU's. Players with larger fleets have higher bounty ratings, making them more attractive targets.

Carpe Diem: "Seize the day." This game type requires you to capture an enemy ship to win the game.

Select Scenario: This allows you to select the location in which the multiplayer battle will take place. The number listed after the map name shows how many players that map supports.
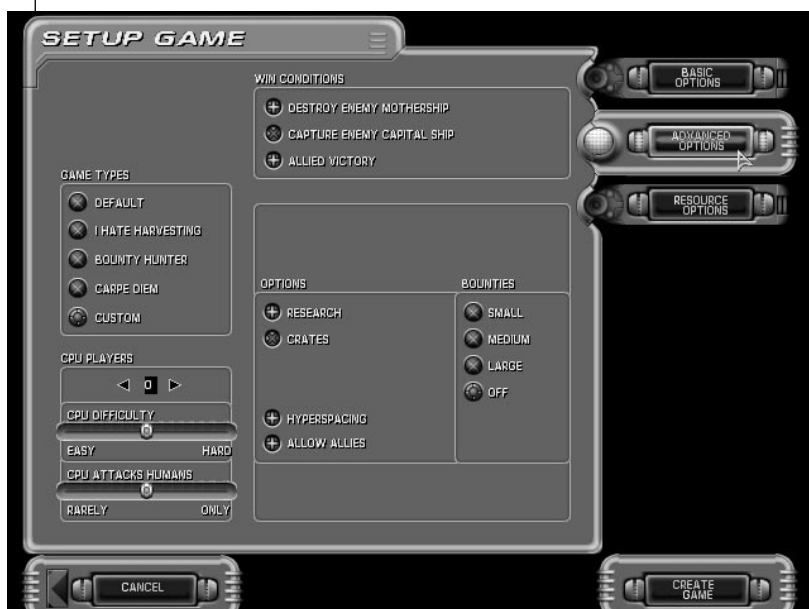
Research: If you toggle this off, everyone starts with all technologies already researched. Also, Somtaaw players will be given all modules on their Command Ship if this option is disabled.

Crates: If you toggle this off, no bonus crates will appear during the course of the game.

Hyperspacing: If you toggle this off, no one will be able to make paid hyperspace jumps during the game.

**Allow Allies:** If you toggle this off, no one will be able to ally during the game.

Bounties: With this option toggled on, you get a bounty in RU's for every enemy unit you destroy. Larger units bring greater rewards.

Saving a Multiplayer Game: While playing the game, hit the [ESC] key and then choose 'save game' from the options list. This option functions the same as it does in single player mode.

Loading a Multiplayer Game: From the multiplayer menu, left-click on the <LOAD SAVED GAME> button to bring up a list of saved multiplayer games. Left click on a game in the list and then left-click on the <LOAD GAME> button to load it.

Recording a Multiplayer Game: Cataclysm allows you to record any multiplayer game and watch it later, from any angle. When you wish to start recording a game, hit the [ESC] key and left-click on the <RECORD> button. Follow the same process that you would if you were saving a game. You may load a recording at any time by left-clicking on <LOAD RECORDED GAME> from the multiplayer menu. Once loaded, you can focus on any ship in the world from the Sensors Manager, not just your own.
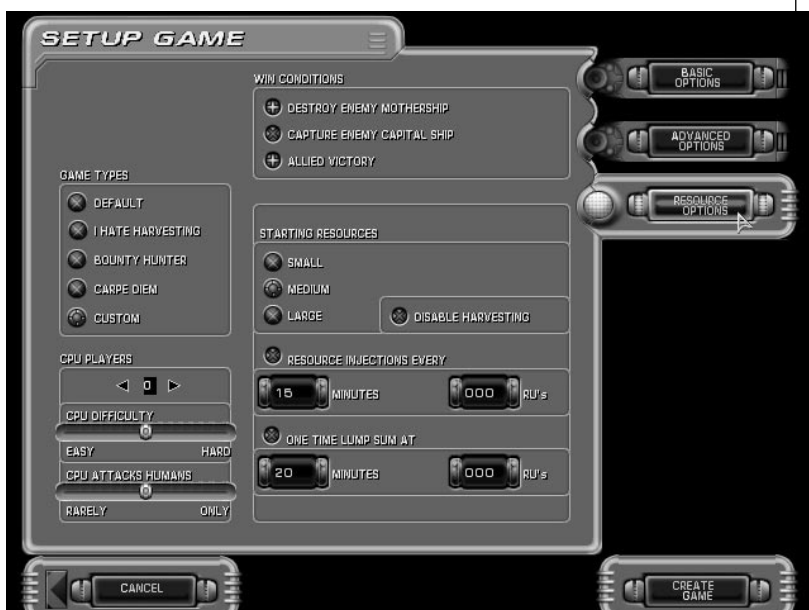
Resources Options:

Disable Harvesting: This toggles resource collection on or off. With it off, you will have to toggle on some other supply of RU's, or your game will run out of resources fairly quickly.

Starting Resources: This sets the level of resources with which each side begins the scenario.

Resource Injections: This section must be toggled on by left-clicking on the checkbox. You can then set how often players will receive a chunk of RU's, and how large that chunk will be.

One Lump Sum: If you toggle this option, you will receive only one lump sum of resources a certain amount of time after the game begins. Both the amount and timing of this precious gift can be set.

WAITING FOR PLAYERS

After you create the game, you are returned to the lobby to wait for players to join your game. When you are ready to start, you can left-click on the <START GAME> button. If you wish to change some of the game options, click on the <SETUP GAME> button and this will take you back to the game options screen. If you no longer wish to host a game, left-click on the <DISSOLVE GAME> button

INTERNET
LOGIN

From this screen you can log onto Sierra.com, change your colors or fleet, change your password, or create a new account.

Launch WON: To connect to the Sierra.com, left-click on this button and you will find yourself in the Cataclysm lobby on Sierra.com. Setting up and playing a game on Sierra.com is identical to playing on a LAN, except that Sierra.com has multiple rooms instead of just one lobby.

Firewall Settings: If you are behind a firewall, you should select the <Behind Firewall> button. If you know you're not behind a firewall, you should check the <Not Behind Firewall> button. If you are unsure or don't know what a firewall is, choose Auto-detect, which is the default. Technical note: When you create a game, if one or more players are behind a firewall, Sierra.com will create a dedicated server for the game instead of using the default peer-to-peer connection. Slow modem users who host games may want to choose the <Behind Firewall> option (even if they are not behind a firewall), so that Sierra.com always uses a dedicated server, which will require less bandwidth on the modem. Remember, if you are unsure what your firewall status is, just select auto-detect.

Player Setup: Left-click on this button if you wish to change your fleet or ship colors.

Change Password: If you wish to change your Sierra.com password, left-click on this button.

Create New Account: If you do not have a Sierra.com account, left-click on this button, then type in the following information:

Name
Left-click on this panel and type in the name you wish to use for your Sierra.com account.
Password
Left-click on this panel and enter the password you wish to use.
Confirm Password
Left-click on this panel and enter your password again to make sure you have typed it incorrectly in the previous panel.
New Account
Left-click on this button to create a new account. If you chose an account name which is already in use, you will have to repeat this process using a different account name.

Cataclysm can be played over the Internet only on Sierra.com, a free gaming site. If you do not already have an account, you must create one before playing Cataclysm.

SIERRA.COM LOBBY

Sierra.com is organized into rooms. Players can leave and enter rooms and create or join games in the current room. Players in the current room are listed in the panel on the right, and chat messages are listed in the panel on the left. The names of the players in the lobby are in the bottom right panel, and any chat messages are printed in the bottom left panel.

Chatting: If you wish to send messages to the other players in the lobby, left-click here and type your message. If you wish to whisper a private message to just one player, type <playername> and then the rest of your message.

Changing Rooms: To join a room or create a room of your own, left-click on this button.

Joining Games: If you want to join a game in this room or create one yourself, left-click on this button.

Contest Server: Left-click on this button to open up a web browser and view official Cataclysm player rankings at Sierra.com's website.

AVAILABLE GAMES

From this screen you can see a list of games in the room displayed in the large panel. You can join any of these games, view the options for each of them, update their ping times, or create your own game.

Updating Ping Times: Left-click on this button to update the ping times of all the games in the list. The lower the ping time, the faster your connection to the game will be.

Joining a Game: Left-click on the game you wish to join on the main list, then left-click on this button.

Creating a Game: Left-click on this button to create a game in the current room. See "setting multiplayer game options" for more information on creating the game.

AVAILABLE GAMES

GAMES IN   no room

NAME	PING	PLAYERS	MAP

PING ALL GAMES

JOIN GAME

CREATE GAME

BACK

AVAILABLE ROOMS

From this screen you can see a list of the rooms in the large panel. You can join one of these rooms or create your own.

Joining a Room: To join a room, first left-click on its name in the list, then left-click on the <JOIN ROOM> button.

Creating a Room: To create a room, left-click on the <CREATE ROOM> button and fill in the necessary information.

AVAILABLE ROOMS

NAME	DESCRIPTION	NUMBER
Room #1	Default English Room #1	1
Salle de discussion #1	Salle par défaut #1	0
Raum Nr #1	Standardraum deutsch Nr.#1	0
Sala #1	Sala esp. predeterminada #1	0
Stanza #1	Default Stanza Italiana #1	0
Korean Room #1	Default Korean Room #1	0

JOIN ROOM

CREATE ROOM

BACK

Multiplayer Statistics Screen

After every multiplayer game, a statistics screen appears detailing information on each player's performance during the game. You can left-click on any row of data to receive a bar graph showing each player's performance at the top of the table.

	1	2	3	4
Survival Time	0:24:05	0:24:05	0:24:05	0:22:24
Other Players Killed	0	0	1	0
Resources Harvested	12000	10624	12000	9600
Crystals Retrieved	0	0	0	0
Technologies Researched	41	41	41	41
Fighters - Built	7	0	32	17
- Lost	9	4	15	21
- Killed	0	19	7	17
Frigates - Built	0	5	4	0
- Lost	0	3	0	0
- Killed	0	0	2	1
Destroyers - Built	1	1	1	1
- Lost	0	0	0	2
- Killed	0	0	1	0
Non-Combat - Built	14	13	13	18
- Lost	0	1	0	30
- Killed	0	5	4	1

Exit

OPTIONS

The options menu can be accessed either from the opening menu or by hitting [ESC] at any time during a game. It gives you access to a number of gameplay and display options.

Audio

Channels: This is the number of sound effects that the game will mix at one time. A high number of channels will give a more immersive experience, but may adversely affect the frame rate of the game. Selecting auto allows the audio engine to turn off channels when the frame rate starts to get low; it will automatically increase the number of channels as the frame rate increases.

Volume Settings: This section, consisting of three slider bars, allows you to set the volume levels for the game's speech, sound effects and music independently. Left-click, hold on the level indicator and drag the mouse.

NOTE: While playing a multiplayer game, you may change the music track you are listening to by pressing [SHIFT]+[<] key to select the previous track or [SHIFT]+[>] key to select the next track. The list of music tracks is limited to the ambient level tracks and battle tunes.

Advanced Speech Settings Menu: Access this sub-menu by left-clicking on the <ADVANCED SPEECH SETTINGS> button in the main audio option screen. Left-click on the <ACCEPT> button when the options are set to your preference.

Sound Quality: High quality is the recommended setting. Selecting low quality will help increase the frame rate of the game. Selecting auto allows the audio engine to drop to low quality when the frame rate starts to get low; it will automatically go back to high quality when the frame rate increases.

Multimedia Speakers: This setting equalizes the audio engine for optimal performance with the average multimedia speaker system.

Stereo/ Surround Sound: This setting equalizes the audio engine for optimal performance with high-end multimedia speakers or a home stereo.

Headphones: This setting equalizes the audio engine for optimal performance with average headphones.

Custom: By pressing the change button, you can tune the optimal equalization settings for your speakers or headphones.

Vocal Settings: This section allows you to pick which speech sounds are heard during the course of your game. Left-click on the check boxes to turn these sounds on or off. Command voices are the responses to your commands given during the game. Status reports are the voices that update you on new sensor reports, battles, and other goings-on in the game. Battle chatter describes the voices of your various pilots and gunners as they perform their tasks, gloat over victories or yell for assistance.

Video

Rendering System: All systems that meet Cataclysm's minimum specifications can run the game in software. However, many users will have some form of hardware accelerator card that allows them to use Direct3D or OpenGL acceleration. This listbox lists the supported rendering systems Cataclysm has detected on your system. The items listed in this window may include Software, Default OpenGL, 3DFx OpenGL and Direct3D Primary display. If you do not have a hardware accelerator for OpenGL, you will still have an option for Default OpenGL. Please note that this will be much slower than the Software option.

Resolution: This panel displays the screen resolutions available for the rendering system you have chosen. Lower resolutions will speed up graphics at the cost of image smoothness and detail. Left-click on the resolution setting you wish to use.

In Game Brightness: This Option affects how brightly the ships are rendered in the game. It does not effect the user interface screens or the backgrounds. You can turn this up to improve the brightness or contrast of the game, depending on your monitor.

Model Detail: This slider bar controls the level of geometric complexity in rendered images. Sliding the bar to the left reduces the number of polygons in a single frame and results in chunkier-looking ships. Adjust to achieve a balance between game performance and visual fidelity.

Custom Effects: This button brings up a screen that lets you control which effects to turn on or off. This screen is covered later.

Number of Effects: This slider bar controls how many effects are drawn in the game. Turning it up will result in a richer, more detailed game experience with more special effects, but will also make it slower. To improve frame rate, you may want to turn this option down.

Texture Detail: Certain video cards do not support paletted textures, and require additional RAM to store temporary copies of the converted textures. This control allows you to adjust how much memory is reserved for the texture pool. Increasing the size of the pool will decrease the amount of graphical slowdown that occurs when downloading textures to your video card. The control will be disabled if your hardware does not require this extra step.

Custom Effects: This sub-menu lets you choose which advanced graphic effects will be activated in your game. Each has its own cost in terms of performance, and its own benefits in terms of visual effect. A particular effect can be turned on or off by left-clicking on the checkbox at the left of the feature name.

Instant SM Transition: Selecting this option causes the transition from the main game screen to the Sensors Manager to be immediate instead of smooth and fluid. Users with slower machines may want to enable the instant transition to improve response.

Blob Alpha: Selecting this option will cause the circles in the Sensors Manager to be displayed with a faded fringe. Owners of slower computers may want to disable this option to speed up the display when in the Sensors Manager.

Stipple Alpha: Selecting this option will cause the software rendering system to display transparency effects with a screen-door appearance, which results in higher graphic performance at the expense of visual quality.

Dynamic Vertex Lighting: Turning this option off will prevent surfaces on your ships from darkening when being damaged by enemy fire. It will also prevent ship surfaces near engines from lighting up when the engines are active.

Surfacing Filtering: Selecting this option will make textures appear smoother and less chunky. Surface filtering is not available when using the software rendering system.

Background Images: This determines whether the galactic backdrop is displayed instead of the blackness of space. Users with slower machines, or those using the software rendering system, may want to turn this option off to speed up gameplay.

Hit Effects: Turning this option off will disable "bullet hit" effects. These effects are played whenever bullets hit ships or other game objects. Owners of slower computers and those without any hardware acceleration may want to disable this option to speed up the game during big battles. See also "Number of Effects" in the video options screen.

Lens Flares: Turning this option off will disable the drawing of lens flares when particularly bright effects are present on the screen.

Damage Effects: When ships get damaged, they may spark, smoke or emit flames. While this is an important gameplay element, rendering of these effects can cause a slow frame rate on slower machines or machines without hardware acceleration. Owners of these slower machines may want to disable these effects. See also "Number of Effects" in the video options screen.

Muzzle Flash Effects: Turning this option off will disable effects that are played when ships fire bullets. Disabling this option may speed up the game on slower machines during big battles, but will not look as good. See also "Number of Effects" in the video options screen.

Bullet Effects: Turning this option off will cause all bullets to be drawn with a simple bullet effect. This can improve the frame rate on slower machines during big battles, but will not look as good. See also "Number of Effects" in the video options screen.

Repair Bots: When a Somtaaw ship upgraded with self-repair is damaged, small repair droids will fly around it's hull making repairs. By turning off this option, you do not turn of the self-repair ability, but the repair bots will no longer appear.

Ship Meshes: In sensors manager large ships, such as your command ship, will appear in full detail. If you turn this option off, these large ships will appear as dots, just as your small ships do.

Pieplate Lines: To aid in moving ships vertically in the movement manager, lines that denote their height will appear. In large, close battle the number of lines can become considerable. By turning off this option, these height lines will not appear in the movement manager.

GAMEPLAY

Mouse Sensitivity: This slider bar controls how much mouse motion it takes to move the cursor on the screen. Left-click and drag the indicator to the left to make your cursor move more slowly and to the right to make it respond to mouse movement more quickly.

Game Frame rate: Choosing "Fastest Game Possible" will set audio, video, and gameplay options to maximize frame rate for low-end systems.

Miscellaneous:

Experience Messages: If this option is enabled, every time a ship in your fleet gains an experience level, a message will be printed to the screen.

Small Menu Font: If you are running Cataclysm in a low resolution, enable this option to reduce the size of font used for the right-click menu.

Auto Waypoint Focus: Enable this option to have the camera automatically focus on each waypoint as you place them in the Sensors Manager.

Context Sensitive Mouse:

Homeworld Left Click: Enable this option to emulate Homeworld-style context sensitive control with the left mouse button. Along with other variations, this will enable double left-clicking on friendly ships to dock, and double left-clicking on friendly ship to repair.

Right Click: Enable this option to use the right mouse button for all context sensitive control (Cataclysm default). In this mode, if the mouse is over an enemy ship, the attack icon will only appear if there are NO special actions to do. Right clicking will do the special action (if any) while left clicking will attack (if possible). If the mouse is over a friendly ship right-clicking will do the special action that is displayed (dock, heal, etc.).

Taskbar:

Hidden: Enabling this will make the objectives, shortcut buttons (if enabled), and player information slide into view only when the user moves the mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen. This emulates Homeworld's default taskbar mechanism.

Shortcut Buttons: Enable this option to have the manager buttons accessible at the bottom of the screen. NOTE: If the "Hidden" option is enabled, you will have to move the mouse pointer to the bottom of the screen for these buttons to appear.

Backdrop: This option enables the translucent background across the lower section of the screen behind the shortcut buttons.

Sensors Options: These options control what is drawn in the Sensors Manager. They are exactly the same options that you can control in the right-click menu while in the Sensors Manager. For more details, read the Sensors Manager description.

Homeworld Classic: Left-click on this button to set all gameplay options to a setting that emulate Homeworld-style controls.

Cataclysm Default: Left-click on this button to set all gameplay options to Cataclysm default settings.

Key Bindings

This menu allows you to change which gameplay commands are activated by which keystroke. To change a command key, double-click on the command you wish to change and press the new key which will trigger the command in the future. Should you wish to erase all the changes you have made and return the command keys to their original assignments, left-click on the <RESET TO DEFAULTS> button.

NOTES: ....

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PART THREE – TECH TREES

Homeworld: Cataclysm uses a research tree system in which research modules, built onto your command ship, can conduct research into technologies that can be used to build or upgrade ships. Most ships require at least one or more technologies in order to be built. Starting from each of the five modules that can be built unto a Command Ship, this chart shows the various paths to more advanced technology.

SOMTAAW MODULE TECH TREE (MULTIPLAYER)

Hangar Bay Module

FIGHTER DRIVE
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
LINKING TECHNOLOGY

FRIGATE DRIVE
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE

DESTROYER DRIVE
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE

Armour Module

ARMOUR LEVEL 2
ARMOUR LEVEL 3

FORCE FIELD LEVEL 1
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 2
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 3

Engineering Module

HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER
SUPPORT SYSTEMS
AFTERBURNER
REPAIR SYSTEMS
SALVAGING ABILITY
CRYSTAL HARVEST ABILITY (Found under "Advanced Engineering Module")

Advanced Engineering Module

MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION
REPAIR BOTS
PHASED TELEMETRY

ADVANCED SENSORS
INFECTION VACCINE (Only multiplayer)
CRYSTAL HARVEST ABILITY (Unlocked by
SALVAGING ABILITY found under
"Engineering Module")

Weapon Module

ADVANCED ION CANNON
MISSILE LAUNCHER
SIEGE CANNON
ENERGY CANNON
E.M.P. WEAPON
QUANTUM EXPLOSIVE CHARGE
REPULSE WEAPON

Besides technologies required to build ships, technologies can also be used to upgrade ships. This list outlines what upgrades are available for each ship.

SOMTAAW TECH TREE (MULTIPLAYER)

Recon
ADVANCED SENSORS (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade)
ENERGY CANNON (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

Acolyte
FIGHTER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNON (upgrade)
MISSILE TECH (upgrade)
LINKING TECH (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

Mimic
FIGHTER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNON (upgrade)
HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER
LINKING TECHNOLOGY (upgrade)
QUANTUM EXPLOSIVE CHARGE (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

Leech
PHASED TELEMETRY
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

ACV
FIGHTER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
LINKING TECHNOLOGY
E.M.P. WEAPON (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

MCV
FIGHTER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER
LINKING TECHNOLOGY
QUANTUM EXPLOSIVE CHARGE (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade)

RammingFrigate
ADVANCED ION CANNON (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
AFTERBURNER
INFECTION VACCINE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

MultibeamFrigate
FRIGATE DRIVE
ADVANCED ION CANNON
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

HiveFrigate
FRIGATE DRIVE
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Dreadnought
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE
MISSILE LAUNCHER
ENERGY CANNONS
ADVANCED ION CANNON
REPULSOR WEAPON (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Carrier

DESTROYER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
SUPPORT SYSTEMS
CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Worker

INFECTION VACCINE (upgrade)
REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade)
SALVAGING ABILITY (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Processor

CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Sentinel

MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 1 (upgrade)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 2 (upgrade)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 3 (upgrade)
ADVANCED SENSORS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Mothership

ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
SIEGE CANNON WEAPON (upgrade)
SUPPORT SYSTEMS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Destroyer

DESTROYER DRIVE
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade)
MISSILE LAUNCHER
ADVANCED ION CANNON
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade)
REPAIR BOTS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade)

Unlike the tech trees of the Taiidan and Kushan from Homeworld, or the Somtaaw from Cataclysm, the Beast acquires its fleet technologies by reverse engineering ships from other races. Each Beast fleet has a variety of ships it can immediately begin researching and building, however most upgrades have to be reverse engineered from captured enemy ships.

BEAST TECH TREE (MULTIPLAYER)

Genetics Module
SUPPORT SYSTEMS
BEAST INFECT WEAPON (upgrade)
CRYSTAL HARVEST ABILITY (upgrade/captured)

Recon (~captured)
ADVANCED SENSORS (upgrade)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Acolyte (captured)
FIGHTER DRIVE
LINKING TECHNOLOGY (upgrade/captured)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Interceptor
FIGHTER DRIVE
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

CloakedFighter
FIGHTER DRIVE
CLOAKING ABILITY
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

AttackBomber
FIGHTER DRIVE
PLASMA BOMB LAUNCHER
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

ACV (captured)
FIGHTER DRIVE
LINKING TECHNOLOGY (captured)
E.M.P. WEAPON (upgrade/captured)
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

MultiGunCorvette
FIGHTER DRIVE
FAST TRACKING TURRETS
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

HeavyCorvette
FIGHTER DRIVE
HEAVY CORVETTE UPGRADE
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

MultibeamFrigate (captured)
FRIGATE DRIVE
ADVANCED ION CANNON
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

HiveFrigate (captured)
FRIGATE DRIVE
MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION (captured)
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

IonArrayFrigate

FRIGATE DRIVE
ADVANCED ION CANNON
CLOAKING ABILITY (upgrade)
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

DFGFrigate

FRIGATE DRIVE
DEFENSE FIELD
ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

HeavyCruiser

DESTROYER DRIVE
HEAVY GUNS
ADVANCED ION CANNON
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
BEAST INFECT WEAPON (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Carrier

DESTROYER DRIVE
CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
BEAST INFECT WEAPON (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

RammingFrigate (captured)

REPAIR BOTS (upgrade/captured)
AFTERBURNER (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Worker (~captured)

REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade/captured)
SALVAGING ABILITY (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Processor (~captured)

CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Sentinel (captured)

MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION (captured)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 1 (upgrade/captured)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)
FORCE FIELD LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)
ADVANCED SENSORS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Mothership

BEAST INFECT WEAPON (upgrade)
CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY (upgrade)
SUPPORT SYSTEMS (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

CuiseMissile

FIGHTER DRIVE
MISSILE LAUNCHER
BIO-WARHEAD
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
BEAST INFECT WEAPON (upgrade)
ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

MissileCorvette

FIGHTER DRIVE
MISSILE LAUNCHER
ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

PART FOUR – SHIPS

KIITH SOMTAAW VESSELS

"Mimic"
Class Infiltration ship

Mass: 55 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 20
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 750 m/s
Special Action: Mimic

After encounters with Raider ships equipped with holographic projectors, Somtaaw Tactical command realized the need for their own infiltration strike craft. With little to go on except pieces of pirate wreckage, Somtaaw engineers were able to create a holofield projector that would just fit into the confines of a fighter hull. The Maach-Nar Projection system requires two full laser arrays, spread out on either side of the fighter. While these arrays rob the fighter of all of its conventional offensive power, they are capable of enveloping the ship completely in a hologram that perfectly mimics the form of any strike- or corvette- class ship recorded in the tactical data banks. Mimics have even been known to disguise themselves as harmless asteroids. Additional signal jammers completely remove the Mimic from enemy scanners, while its visual cross section is immune to all but the closest inspection.

Mimics were originally used simply to infiltrate enemy fleets and orbital bases, in order to assess enemy strength or eavesdrop on close communication bands. Unfortunately, desperate times have lead to desperate measures, and more and more Mimics find themselves pressed into an offensive role as a suicide unit, especially in circumstances where friendly fleet strength is not high enough to break through to the objective.

Pilots for this duty are drawn from the ranks of the Sleepers, those destitute souls who awakened on Hiigara without a single friend or family member left alive after the destruction of Kharak. These pilots have no motivation except revenge against those who took everything from them, and Mimics perform their suicide missions fearlessly and without regret. The last thing that many a surprised resourcer or minelayer will hear is the strangled cry of victory from a Sleeper as he detonates his Mimic against the enemy hull.

| Required Tech - | FIGHTER DRIVE |
| | MIMIC TECH |

Upgrade Tech -	ENERGY CANNON
	LINKING TECHNOLOGY
	QUANTUM EXPLOSIVE CHARGE
	ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
	ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Martyr"
Class (MCV)
Infiltration Corvette

Mass: 110 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 40
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 550 m/s
Special Action: Mimic

The Martyr is, in essence, a virtual corvette that is formed when two Mimic strike craft dock to form a larger composite vehicle known as an M.C.V. (Mimic Composite Vehicle). The double-hulled Martyr is capable of generating a much larger holofield than the solitary Mimic, and can disguise itself as various frigate-sized ships or very large asteroids. This greater disguise ability can be used offensively to lull an enemy into thinking that reinforcements have arrived for them, or defensively to make a desperate fleet seem much more substantial than it is, with the addition of 2 or 3 phantom frigates.

For more desperate times, the Martyr, like the Mimic, can be used as a suicide craft of devastating power. The overloading of the linked drives can pack enough explosive force to gut a Frigate-sized vessel. Theoretical work on quantum explosives could lead to an increased payload to this subtle and terrifying suicide corvette.

When left to their own devices, Martyr teams will often disguise themselves as a friendly damaged frigate and loiter at the edge of a battle, emitting a distress call. When enemy salvagers come alongside to take control of their prize, the Martyr will detonate, trading the lives of the two pilots for those of a dozen or more of the enemy. For revenge-driven Sleepers, there are few better ways to go...

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                     HOLOGRAPHIC EMITTER
                     LINKING TECHNOLOGY

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNON
                     QUANTUM EXPLOSIVE CHARGE
                     ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
                     ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Avenger" Class (ACV) corvette

Mass: 180 tons
Firepower: 170
Armor: 140
Coverage: 6%
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 600 m/s
Special Action: Unlink, EMP

The Avenger was the first breakthrough that Somtaaw engineers made in ship linkage technology. Utilizing some of the remnants of dynamic surface technology passed down through analysis of Bentusi designs, the Acolyte heavy fighter was created with ventral docking ports and control links, so that two heavy fighters could dock to form a corvette class ship. While others had thought this kind of solid link could only be achieved with a full tech team in a hanger bay, the dynamic surface systems of the Acolyte are capable of linking in a matter of seconds while the two ships drift in deep space.

Once linked into the Avenger corvette composite craft, one pilot takes over the actual flying of the craft while the other takes over as weapons officer. While both cockpits are capable of assuming either function through the use of virtual displays, it is traditionally the officer with the best combat record who ends up "on top", flying the Avenger. The WO is responsible for managing both the nose-mounted quad mass drivers and the highly advanced Electromagnetic Pulse system, which is capable of overloading the systems of any enemy ships nearby.

The Avenger is technically designated as a corvette due to its mass and dual crew, but in reality it inhabits the middle ground between heavy fighter and full corvette. The Avenger has less armor, less firepower and lacks the turret coverage of a traditional corvette, but it is faster and more maneuverable, which allows it to bring its fixed weaponry to bear almost as fast as a turret mount would. Economic considerations and sheer hangar space problems aboard its command and carrier vessels have led Somtaaw Fleet Command to reject a standard corvette design in favor of composite vehicles such as the Avenger and the Martyr MCV. This has resulted in the Avenger being the workhorse of the Somtaaw fleet, and in any combat situations, Avenger wings will be deployed directly from their command ships to guard against incoming strike craft, or even engage enemy frigates en masse. Their ability to split into high speed Acolytes and rejoin at the target area for heavy firepower makes them one of the most adaptable weapons systems in Hiigaran space.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                       LINKING TECHNOLOGY

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNON
                       E.M.P. WEAPON
                       ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
                       ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Dervish" Class Multi-Beam Frigate

Mass: 10200 tons
Firepower: 3900
Armor: 4000
Coverage: 90%
Maneuverability: medium
Max. Velocity: 370 m/s
Special Action: None

The Ion Beam Frigate has long been the mainstay of any offensive star fleet. The only drawback to these powerful beam weapons is that they are so large that frigate-sized craft can only support them in a spinal mount configuration... and this restricts combat coverage. Somtaaw Fleet Command, unwilling to make the jump to the heavy cruiser chassis just to incorporate ion cannons in turret mounts, instead decided to research advanced ion beam technology jointly with Kiith Paktu. This change in initiative resulted in the development of the helix bundle, which allows charged streams to be accelerated in a tightly curved configuration.

The Dervish class frigate is built around just such an accelerator helix, and uses a multi-path beam-splitter to direct the charged ion stream to any or all of its five focusing turrets. The turrets themselves are solid state devices that use magnetic fields to focus and direct the ion beam in a large firing arc. Using the cold vacuum of space to keep functioning at super-cooled temperatures, the focusing turret is highly efficient and capable of a high rate of fire. While these ion beams are not as powerful as the ones fired from a traditional Ion Frigate, this lack is more than made up by the increased coverage and decreased fire time.

Dervishes function best in the anti-strike craft role, where their rapid tracking ability allows them to tag enemy fighters with devastating firepower. The sight of a single Dervish plowing through a cloud of enemy strike craft with all beams firing is often enough to cause even the most dedicated fighter pilot to reconsider his options. When faced with enemy capital ships, especially other beam frigates such as the Taiidani Sajuuk Cor, the Dervish is forced to rely on its maneuverability to keep turning out of the enemy's strongest firing arc, while still bringing at least 2 or 3 turrets to bear.

Required Tech -   FRIGATE DRIVE
                     ADVANCED ION CANNON

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNON
                     REPAIR BOTS
                     ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE
                     ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Hive"
Class Advanced
Drone Frigate

HIVE FRIGATE
FIREPOWER: 1400
COVERAGE: 12%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 3800
MAX VELOCITY: 390 m/s
MASS: 9900 TONS
Special Action: Swarm

During the Homeworld wars, the Puppeteer class drone frigate was an excellent idea that arrived ahead of its time. While the Puppeteer could surround itself in a sphere of remote turrets, the drones lacked maneuverability, and once they were destroyed, the unarmed Puppeteer either retreated or was destroyed as well. This lack of adaptability quickly relegated the Puppeteer to light anti-strike craft roles and rear area guard duty, where its weakness would not prove quite so deadly.

Seeing potential in a design that other Kiith were quickly abandoning, Somtaaw engineers went back to the drawing board both with the frigate itself and the drones. The major breakthrough in drone design came from studying the attack swarms used by the protectors of Khadesh. Using that technology as a baseline, engineers were able to design and build their own Swarmer drone fighter, which retained the firepower of the old static drone but combined it with full maneuverability and a combat AI. Now that the drones were able to control themselves, the space aboard the command frigate that was being used for drone techs and their equipment could be utilized for weaponry.

The result of all this design work is the Hive class ADF, a heavily armored frigate armed with twin medium mass drivers in a fixed forward mount and having the capacity to launch and maintain six Swarmer class attack drones. The Hive's mass drivers are not powerful enough to handle another capital ship all by themselves, but are very effective in supplying heavy fire support for the Swarmer wing. While the Hive is a much more rounded combat craft than the Puppeteer, it is still vulnerable to massed strike craft attacks if its compliment of Swarmers is destroyed. Hive squadrons will often enter combat first and use their drones to draw fire away from more valuable manned strike craft, and then retire for a few minutes to rebuild their Swarmer compliment before returning to battle.

Required Tech -   FRIGATE DRIVE
                          MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNON
                          REPAIR BOTS
                          ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE
                          ARMOUR LEVEL 2
                          ARMOUR LEVEL 3

"Sentinel"
Class defence pod

Mass: 21 tons
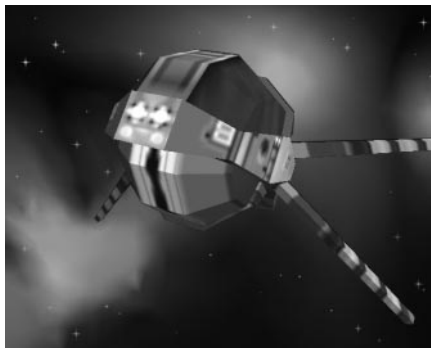**Firepower:** 290
Armor: 350
Coverage: 15%
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 250 m/s
Special Action: Shield

The Sentinel has the dubious distinction of being the smallest manned craft currently serving in any Hiigaran fleet. Microships were developed by Somtaaw engineers to function purely as remote drone craft, like the Swarmer attack drone or the Leech breaching pod; the Sentinel was originally intended as an advanced mobile sensor platform. Unfortunately, as more and more design features were added to the Sentinel's specs, it quickly outpaced the control capability of even the most advanced AI. The final breaking point came when energy scientists came up with a compact force-field generator and added it to the Sentinel's systems. Flight AI's were unable to cope with the distortions created by the polarized gravity fields, and this finally had tragic results during a live test, when drone Sentinels created a full strength field and slipped out of position, slicing a Dervish frigate in half with a loss of all hands.

The Sentinel project would have been cancelled at this point if not for the efforts of a certain Aart ne Somtaaw, a rather vertically challenged junior member of the engineering team. After installing a rudimentary cockpit into the prototype and donning the lightest vacc suit he could find, Aart put the Sentinel through a punishing set of trials, using all the Sentinel's advanced systems and proving that powerful guns, long range sensors and a field generator could all function in one very small craft.

As a reward, Aart was put in charge of assembling the first Sentinel Squadron. Dubbed the War Dwarves by the rest of the fleet, these small pilots have one of the most dangerous and unglamorous jobs in the fleet: standing guard in tiny cans of plasteel, keeping an eye out for incoming threats and protecting thousands of their Kiith mates aboard the larger ships of the fleet.

Required Tech -   MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNONS
                         FORCE FIELD LEVEL 1
                         FORCE FIELD LEVEL 2
                         FORCE FIELD LEVEL 3
                         ADVANCED SENSORS
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Leech"
Class breaching pod

Mass: 26 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 30
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 1250 m/s
Special Action: Leech

The Leech is the most sophisticated drone in the Somtaaw fleet, and is designed to get in and heavily damage enemy ships in situations where a conventional attack craft would be destroyed in seconds. The Leech is designed to be stealthy and evade all conventional sensors, so that it can come right up to an enemy vessel and clamp on. The drone is unarmed except for a payload of molecular acid, which it uses to bore through enemy hulls so that it can access the plasma drive conduits. Once bonded to the enemy ship, the Leech uses the enemy ship's own drive plasma to melt through the hull, damaging it slowly. The Leech's AI is designed to infiltrate the enemy ship's systems and relay false messages, silencing damage alarms and repair routines; in general, the crew of an enemy vessel doesn't realize anything is wrong until it is too late. The Leech carries a resource pod as well, so that it can actually absorb the mass of the enemy vessel instead of simply venting it into space. This mass can be returned as raw materials to the Command ship, if required.

In order to stay in contact with the Command ship, but avoid having its transmissions picked up by enemy ships, the Leech uses a phased telemetry system that actually shunts part of the signal through hyperspace. It is rumored that Taiidani scientists are already working on a system that would detect these signals, but this would require a massive upgrading to advanced sensors.

Required Tech -   PHASED TELEMETRY

Upgrade Tech -   ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Deacon"
Class Destroyer

Mass: 28,000 tons
Firepower: 8500
Armor: 16,000
Coverage: 30%
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 325 m/s
Special Action: None

When the great Crusade against the Beast was in its darkest days, Kiith Somtaaw found itself desperate for heavier firepower and the capital ships to carry it. While research into Bentusi design philosophy would eventually bear fruit in the awe-inspiring Dreadnought, it would have not come in time had the Deacon class Destroyer not been pushed into service. The Deacon was originally intended to be a new generation of heavy transports, but when the demands of war hit the Somtaaw fleet hard, the design was quickly modified while still on the drawing board. The Deacon's loading booms were scrapped and replaced with heavy ion beams in a fixed forward mount, while the 4 side-mounted point-defense turrets were replaced with medium rail guns to give all-around firepower. The most innovative addition was the dorsal mounted missile turret, which gives the destroyer a full 360 degrees of long-range hitting power—capable of tearing apart enemy frigates before they can get into range to return fire.

The Deacon's baptism of fire came at the battle of Coruc Farr, when two Somtaaw destroyers were left alone to hold off a Beast Heavy Cruiser and a full flight of infected strike craft. In the thick of battle, the lead destroyer, the Naar-Tel, closed with the beast cruiser and was raked by an infection beam. As deck after deck of the Destroyer fell to the Beast infection, the Naar's Captain made a desperate decision to vent drive plasma into the infected areas and then out into space. At the cost of gutting a quarter of his own ship and killing a sizable percentage of his own crew, the Naar's Captain was able to keep his ship in the battle and help destroy the beast Cruiser.

From that day on, the Naar Directive, as it became known, became the standard response from Allied heavy capital ships to Beast infections. And, while the price in Hiigarian life is always high, instant death in a blast of high-energy plasma is preferable to the twisted immortality of becoming part of the Beast.

Required Tech -   DESTROYER DRIVE
                      MISSILE LAUNCHER
                      ADVANCED ION CANNON

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNONS
                      ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE
                      REPAIR BOTS
                      ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Shaman"
Class Carrier

Mass: 129,000 tons
Firepower: 4200
Armor: 65,000
Coverage: 80%
Maneuverability: very low
Max. Velocity: 300 m/s
Special Action: None

The Shaman class Carrier had been in development for some time before it was finally brought into battle. This Carrier was based on Kiith Somtaaw's first foray into heavy ship construction, the Chieftan class Ore Processor, and retains the same no-frills approach to capital ship building; engineers arrived at the design by upgrading the Chieftan's main power plant to support a military-class drive system and a PDA construction bay. The Shaman is not an elegant Carrier, but it is durable, efficient and crewed by the best that Kiith Somtaaw has to offer. The two outboard bays are capable of launching and retrieving multiple strike craft, while the inboard Frigate bays are guarded by heavily reinforced doors, capable of taking multiple ion beam strikes and still protecting the fragile construction and maintenance equipment within.

The Shaman was originally designed as the second phase of Kiith Somtaaw's expansion into deep space. With the two main Command Ships exploring and exploiting a sector, Shamans were meant to consolidate and help harvest multiple resource sites while the Command ships moved on. Their construction bays were never intended for anything more than building a couple of recon squadrons and acolytes for survey/guard duty; the frigate bay was there simply to build and maintain Worker class vessels. With the advent of full-blown war, however, the Shaman's bays were upgraded to full production ability, and room was made in what was supposed to be a resource hold for sleeper bays to support spare pilots.

In their combat role, Shamans will often construct a wing of Sentinel defense pods and operate behind their forcefields while supporting a fleet in direct combat. The Shaman's medium turrets are not meant to operate offensively, but they can still cause considerable damage to any slow-moving target that wanders into range. With repair bays so close to combat, Hive and Dervish frigates can afford to quickly pull back behind the Shaman's Sentinel shield and dock with relative safety.

Required Tech -   DESTROYER DRIVE
                       SUPPORT SYSTEMS

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNONS
                       CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
                       REPAIR BOTS
                       ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE
                       ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Archangel" Class Dreadnought

Mass: 152,000 tons
Firepower: 24,000
Armor: 85,000
Coverage: 80%
Maneuverability: very low
Max. Velocity: 280 m/s
Special Action: Repulse

Desperate wars require desperate measures, and the development of the Archangel class dreadnought was no exception. Even though Kiith Somtaaw was struggling valiantly, it eventually became clear that the fleet had no answer to the Beast version of the Taiidan Heavy Cruiser. And, while it would obviously take another full cycle for Somtaaw to research and develop the technologies needed to build the Hiigaran Avatar Heavy Cruiser, it was equally obvious that there would be nothing left of Kiith Somtaaw by the time a cycle of research could be completed!

Taking deep penetration scans of Bentusi tradeships, Somtaaw engineers tried to duplicate the radial binding design that give Bentusi ships their incredible durability and energy control. The experiments were less than successful, and dozens of engineers died as experimental alloys gave out under the incredible pressure to which they were subjected. Finally, as losses were threatening to push the Hiigaran fleet back into their home system, Somtaaw engineers were able to produce a hybrid design that had some of the durability and power of a Bentusi craft and was still manageable with Hiigaran crews and technology.

The Archangel combines the best attributes of the Avatar Heavy Cruiser and the Taiidani Missile Destroyer, and shields it all in a hull of curved, bonded armor plate that deflects more damage than it absorbs. With 4 heavy turrets backed by 2 full missile banks, the Archangel initially had a powerful offensive punch, but was still vulnerable to flanking maneuvers that brought enemy fire in from the rear, where the heavy mass drivers couldn't reach. This problem was solved rather dramatically with the addition of two heavy ion turrets, which covered the top fore and bottom aft firing hemispheres. Once released into active service, the Archangel has proved devastating to Beast and Imperial forces alike, despite the fact it takes a crack crew to keep her power systems under control.

Required Tech -	ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE
	MISSILE LAUNCHER
	ENERGY CANNONS
	ADVANCED ION CANNON
Upgrade Tech -	REPULSOR WEAPON
	REPAIR BOTS
	ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Chieftan Mk3" Class Ore Processor

Mass: 89,000 tons
Firepower: 2500
Armor: 45,000
Coverage: 80%
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 250 m/s
Special Action: None

Next to the Worker resource collector, the Chieftain is one of the most venerable designs in the Somtaaw fleet. As its designation implies, the Chieftain is basically a massive ore processing and refinery unit, designed to take in cargo from workers in deep space and process it. While it is almost as large as a carrier, the Chieftain is mostly composed of vast storage bays and long processing lines. Duty aboard a Chieftain is hard, dirty work, but most of Kiith Somtaaw is more comfortable with the honest work of mining than the killing and dying of war.

The first Chieftains produced were strictly industrial ships; with 4 high-speed transfer docking pads for Workers, they could strip an asteroid pocket bare in days. It was only after a series of attacks from Turanic raiders that the Chieftain was fitted with 4 medium mass driver turrets. As full war broke out, the Chieftain was yet again modified with 4 automated repair beams. Since there are no excess officers to manage these systems, the repair beams are under AI control, and automatically begin to repair any friendly unit in range.

Despite these changes, which have led to the Mark 3 version, the Chieftain is one of the few pre-war ship designs that has never brought aboard combat officers to help with managing ship systems and fleet coordination. Every Chieftain that has ever been launched and every one that has been lost in combat to this date has been crewed by nothing more or less than the ancient soul of Kiith Somtaaw: the Miners.

Required Tech -   HANGAR MODULE

Upgrade Tech -   CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
        ENERGY CANNONS
        REPAIR SYSTEMS
        REPAIR BOTS
        ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Explorer"
Class Deep Space
Mining Vessel

Mass: 613,000 tons
Firepower: 5400
Armor: 98,000
Coverage: 70%
Maneuverability: very low
Max. Velocity: 110 m/s
Special Action: Siege Cannon

The epic voyage of the Mothership proved that in order to survive the threats posed by a hostile Galaxy, you had to have a vessel that was prepared to handle anything. Once it became obvious that politics on Hiigara would favor the most powerful families, lesser Kiith like Somtaaw realized that their only hope to achieve some sort of political and social autonomy lay in the stars. Already experienced in deep space mining techniques from their work in the Kharak system, Somtaaw engineers began to design the kind of deep space mining vessel they knew would be able to spend a year or more on the circuit, harvesting, refining and trading while supporting a crew of nearly a thousand engineers, miners and flight crew.

A ship of this size and power exceeded even the construction capabilities of the Imperator class Carrier, and so Somtaaw petitioned for access to the shipyard facilities of the orbiting Mothership herself. Through many political trials, (see History of Kiith Somtaaw) the New Daiamiid finally granted Somtaaw access to the Mothership for a mere 45 days. The Explorer Class design was finished within days when Somtaaw Engineers gained control of the Mothership's PDA, and construction began immediately; all parties involved knew full well that this was probably the only time Somtaaw would have access to the massive construction facility. Accordingly, no expense was spared!

The first Explorer was dubbed the Faal-Corum and launched on day 20, to the rousing cheers of thousands of Somtaaw watching from monitors planetside. Even before the Faal-Corum cleared the docks, engineers were modifying the design of the second Mining ship to incorporate the lessons learned in constructing the first. The Kuun-Lan launched on day 35 with more powerful engines, an extra layer of armor, and a 30% greater module capacity.

It is these modules that are the core of the Explorer class design philosophy. Knowing that this was the only chance they had to create a near-Mothership class vessel, Somtaaw engineers designed the Explorer to adapt to almost any situation through the use of modules that could be constructed by the Explorer herself while still in deep space. The hard lessons of the Homeworld War were also not forgotten, and, though intended for exploration and mining, the Explorer carries a full compliment of heavy and medium turrets for self protection, and is capable of constructing both the Seeker class reconnaissance fighter and the Acolyte heavy fighter. Pirate corvettes expecting an easy prize have often realized their error too late as an Explorer's heavy rail guns come on-line; Worker class resourcers will always retreat to the protection of the Command ship's guns at the first sign of trouble.

Both the Faal-Corum and the Kuun-Lan require a crew of 1150, and during long missions they carry an additional 2000 crew members in cold sleep, to help man the ship in 3-month shifts.   Currently the Faal-Corum is on a deep space survey mission, while the Kuun-Lan is on the second leg of a 9-month mission to mine the star systems surrounding Hiigara.

Required Tech -   NONE

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNONS
                        CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
                        REPAIR BOTS
                        SIEGE CANNON WEAPON
                        SUPPORT SYSTEMS
                        ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Seeker"
Class Reconnaissance
fighter

Mass: 41 tons
Firepower: 40
Armor: 25
Coverage: 4%
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 1050 m/s
Special Action: None

The Seeker class of deep reconnaissance and survey vessels was one of the first original designs produced by the Kiith Somtaaw Engineering families. The first priority of the Somtaaw mining fleet was to find and process the rarest and most valuable resources to be found in deep space, especially exotic volatiles and super-stable elements. To this end, Somtaaw purchased the manufacturing rights to the Heavy Neutrino scanning array from Kiith S'jet. While the unusual size of the scanning array means it is usually placed on research platforms or Frigate-sized explorers, Somtaaw needed the array to rapidly search entire systems at relatively close range. To that end, Somtaaw Engineers have basically wrapped a simple cockpit and maneuver drive around the array. While the shakedown period for this design was extensive, due to the unorthodox approach, the result is a high speed recon platform that has the attributes of a standard light fighter and the sensor abilities of a ship 20 or 30 times the size and expense.

While the initial prototype was unarmed, repeated encounters with Turanic raiders convinced Somtaaw Fleet Command that the Seeker needed to carry some sort of weapons system. In the end, a light mass driver was jury-rigged on a belly mount, which gives the Seeker a limited self-defense capability that can usually deter raiders until the recon ship can use its superior speed to escape. While the main function of the Seeker's array is to scan for minerals and radiation signatures, it is quickly reconfigured to track vessels.

As a result of the fact that most recon patrols require spending long periods of time in a small cockpit, many Seekers pilots are young, single women of smaller stature. This has led to deep recon missions being referred to as "Heartbreak Patrols"...but whether this is more to do with the stress they put on fledgling relationships or the disruptions caused by these pilots making up for lost time upon their return is not known.

Required Tech -   NONE

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED SENSORS
                    ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
                    ENERGY CANNON
                    ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Acolyte"
Class heavy fighter

Mass: 90 tons
Firepower: 85
Armor: 70
Coverage: 6%
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 825 m/s
Special Action: Link

The Acolyte class of heavy fighter/interceptor is unique to Kiith Somtaaw. While other Kiith have worked to advance the traditional Blade series of interceptors, Somtaaw found itself unable to afford the various patents and maintenance licenses being charged by the martial Kiithid to participate in the upgrade program. Instead, Somtaaw struck a deal with the enigmatic Bentusi. The Bentusi trade-ships are some of the most powerful vessels in the Galaxy, but there are some conditions that even they are unable or unwilling to take their ships into. In return for the services of the mining vessel Faal-Corum in retrieving certain artifacts from very compact asteroid belt, the Bentusi "handed down" an advanced fighter and drive system, which eventually was back-engineered into the Acolyte fighter. While the relatively pacifistic Bentusi would not transfer any weapons technology along with the Acolyte design, they seem to have no long-term objections to the Somtaaw arming the Acolyte with duel rapid-fire mass-drivers.

With the inherent advantages of an being based on adaptive Bentusi technology, the Acolyte lends itself easily to modification, and Somtaaw engineers are still working on expanding the full potential of this fighter design. The ultra-efficient fusion drive allows the Acolyte to function without refueling, and this technology has been integrated into other Somtaaw strike craft.

While Kiith Somtaaw is a mining Kiith by trade, it does require protection against Raiders and Imperialist patrols, as its two Command ships, the Kuun-Lan and the Faal-Corum, range far from the protection of Hiigaran space in their exploration and resourcing missions. Acolyte wings are manned by a relatively small group of hardened combat veterans that began their careers during the Homeworld War. These pilots are not easily surprised after 15 years in the cockpit, and are the equals of any fighter pilots found in the martial Kiithid...as many a pirate scout has discovered to his regret.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE

Upgrade Tech -   ENERGY CANNON
                       MISSILE TECH
                       LINKING TECH
                       ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE
                       ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Worker"
Class
resource collector

Mass: 5200 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 1500
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: medium
Max. Velocity: 425 m/s
Special Action: Harvest, Repair, Salvage

While most Kiith still use the primary resource collector design created nearly 50 years ago during the Mothership's construction, Kiith Somtaaw has been forced by circumstance to radically redesign the entire resourcer concept. Somtaaw fleets often work deep inside dense asteroid fields, where the massive resource collector cannot maneuver fast enough to avoid disastrous collisions, and so a completely different vessels design was needed, in order to function in more complex environments.

While various hi-maneuver resourcer/frigate hybrids were attempted, none of the prototypes survived actual field-testing as the turn-rate was disastrously compromised by the full loads a resourcer is expected to carry. Then, deep in the Mothership's main databanks, a Somtaaw engineer came across a hull design for a heavy cargo re-entry vehicle. It had been used 120 years earlier on Kharak to haul crews and raw components to and from low orbit during the construction of the Mothership Scaffolding. While the original purpose of the ship was no longer relevant, the shaped, blunt-projectile hull shape that had been crucial to re-entry was now ideal for providing a compact center of gravity. When refitted with modern engines and control systems, this new resourcer design can haul almost as much as the old one, but can rotate quickly on its center of gravity and easily avoid collision, even in the most congested flight spaces.

The first production model is just now being accepted by Somtaaw mining teams, though there is some resentment to the ship's class name, the "Worker"... as it seems to make an already mundane task seem even less glamorous than it was before. Engineers argue that as they devise new applications for the ship, such as repair or possibly salvaging, the multi-purpose nature of the word "worker" will become readily apparent.

Required Tech -   NONE

Upgrade Tech -   INFECTION VACCINE
                      REPAIR SYSTEMS
                      SALVAGING ABILITY
                      REPAIR BOTS
                      ARMOUR LEVEL 2

"Minion"
Class Heavy Tug
[Ramming Frigate]

Mass: 12900 tons
Firepower: 2500
Armor: 4700
Coverage: 6%
Maneuverability: medium
Max. Velocity: 398 m/s
Special Action: Ram

The Minion class of heavy tugs is another pre-landfall design, which has been resurrected and adapted to the unique needs of Kiith Somtaaw. The original Minion design was used for moving massive modular sections of the scaffold and Mothership into position for final lockdown. For the Somtaaw, this frigate class hull with a massive bow section, a heavy engine module and built-in grapple capabilities was exactly what they needed in an asteroid tug. With extensive modifications to the high-output fusion drive and a redesign of the armor layering, the newly christened Minion was ideal for pushing very large asteroids out of dense, dangerous belts of debris for fast processing close to the command ship. In circumstances where a larger mass needs to be broken down in order for Workers to harvest it, The Minion employs a short-range fusion torch to carve up the target rock.

Since the Minion is a relatively simple vessel to fly, the 5-man crew is usually composed of non-combat flight officers fresh from training, in order to give them experience in the field. While this "on the job training" is highly efficient, and frees experienced personnel up for more complex vessels and tasks, it does lead to some unusual interpretations of the Minion mission profile. Recently, the mining fleet headed by the command-ship Kuun-lan was under attack by a Turanic Raider fleet, backed up by a Chieftain Class carrier. Standard Somtaaw procedure has all non-combat vessels, including Workers and Minions, retreating to the command ship at the first sign of battle, but two Minion crews took it upon themselves to ignore this command. Realizing that the pirate Carrier would eventually overwhelm the Somtaaw Acolytes and Seekers, forcing a retreat from a highly valuable belt of radioactives, the Minions drove straight into battle and rammed the Chieftain broadside. After grappling on and giving maximum power to their fusion drives, the Minions were able to push the Pirate Carrier deep into a fast-moving pack of asteroids, where the larger ship was battered and finally destroyed by rock impacts. From this event on, Minion pilots have jokingly referred to their ships as "Ramming Frigates" and have begun painting kill markers on their crash helmets.

Required Tech -   AFTERBURNER

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED ION CANNON
                      REPAIR BOTS
                      INFECTION VACCINE
                      ARMOUR LEVEL 2

TURANIC RAIDER VESSELS

"Bandit" Class Interceptor

Mass: 70 tons
Firepower: 65
Armor: 75
Coverage: 5%
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 780 m/s

The Bandit class interceptor has the dubious distinction of being the first hostile vessel encountered by the Exiles on their quest for the Homeworld. For a people who actually debated the need for a dedicated strike craft at all, the appearance of this high-speed, heavily armored fighter blazing away with its advanced mass drivers was a rude shock. While little is known about the origins of Raider technology, the abilities of the Bandit appear to be the result of a practical design refined through countless combat situations, as opposed to any exotic material or energy generation. Pirate vessels are based on the simplest application of any technology, combined with armoring each and every internal module to create a ship of very high durability with very low maintenance costs.

While not particularly known for their innovative thinking, the Turanic Raiders have managed to keep the Bandit on par with the Taiidani heavy interceptor and the Hiigaran Blade fighter, and it is still as formidable an opponent now as it was 15 years ago. Tests performed on captured Bandits reveal a ship that is highly responsive, but very tricky to fly as it nears its performance envelope. The increased mass of the armored components, combined with the Bandit's all-aspect maneuver thrusters, can lead to dangerous slewing when performing high g-turns at maximum thrust.

Bandit wings depend on surprise for most of their combat success, and often enter battle without warning. The last thing many a surprised escort fighter has seen is the blue-white streak of a Bandit's drive trail before a storm of mass driver rounds sends them on to their next life. For their tendency to lurk in asteroid belts in order to hide from enemy sensors, Bandits have been given the nickname "Rock Rats" by Hiigaran crews.

"Thief"
Class Corvette

Mass: 660 tons
Firepower: 200
Armor: 1200
Coverage: 10%
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 550 m/s

The Turanic Raiders survive by two means: raiding orbital settlements through superior force of arms, and capturing enemy ships whole. It is the act of stealing entire vessels whole which has brought the ancient term "pirate" back into common usage. Using similar control override systems as those onboard the Taiidani Salvage Corvette, the aptly code-named Thief class corvette is the standard Raider capture vessel. The Thief is very heavily armed and armored when compared to a conventional salvage corvette, and carries twin mass driver turrets mounted on either side of the forward crew compartment. Its override equipment is mounted in a well-protected bay in the belly of the Thief, and grapples onto the target as contact is made between the two hulls. As the connection is made, the salvaging equipment drills into the enemy ship's hull and subverts any and all control systems, rendering the enemy ship helpless as the Thief tows it back to base.

The larger rear area of the Thief contains a spartan crew compartment, which holds a strike team capable of burning their way through a hull and taking a ship by force if need be. Some tactical analysts believe that some Thief corvettes might have replaced this assault compartment with some sort of sophisticated stealth technology, which allows them to catch their targets unaware. This theory was raised as an answer to an ever-increasing number of ships lost to the Raiders over the past few years. In many cases, the Raiders struck fast enough that no distress signal or beacon was set off. Data recovered from vessels recaptured from the pirates have produced data fragments that seem to show the sudden appearance of several Thief corvettes. Further investigation by both Hiigaran and Republican Taiidan intelligence forces continues.

"Brigand"
Class Missile Corvette

Mass: 775 tons
Firepower: 320
Armor: 1300
Coverage: 60%
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 500 m/s

Most battles involving Turanic raiders are small fleet actions. Standard Raider tactics are to engage a target with a flight of Bandit Interceptors, which provide cover and distraction for a flight of Thief corvettes which dock with and take over the prize. If any sort of defenses are expected, however, it is often the Brigand class Missile Corvette which provides the quick and deadly striking power needed to overwhelm any escorting fighters or corvettes.

The Brigand follows standard Turanic corvette design philosophy, wedding a heavily armored hull with an overpowered engine; the price to be paid is a reduction of crew space and minimal life-support. The twin medium missile bays are mounted in typical Turanic fashion on either side of the cockpit. The vessel carries two crew seated back-to-back; a pilot facing forward and a weapons officer behind him, both supported by the liquid membrane environment needed by most Raiders.

Brigands have the most difficulty in dealing with enemy fighters, which employ high-speed strafing runs and tight turns that can throw off the heavy missiles. An experienced Brigand weapons officer will wait until a fighter decelerates for the return pass before firing off a volley of missiles; this often guarantees a hit before the fighter can pick up sufficient maneuvering speed to dodge. Brigands have the greatest advantage over Hiigaran and Republican Ion Beam frigates, which have difficulty bringing their main gun to bear on the rapidly turning Brigands. Raiders have been known to employ Brigands in large attack groups of 15 to 20 and attack large capital ships such as destroyers and even carriers. It can be a terrifying sight seeing nearly two dozen Brigands, each firing twice a second, circling a burning carrier as missile after missile slams into her hull. If significant support doesn't arrive quickly, the carrier must choose either surrender or destruction—there is no other option once the Raiders spring this kind of surprise.

"Assassin" Class Ion Array Frigate
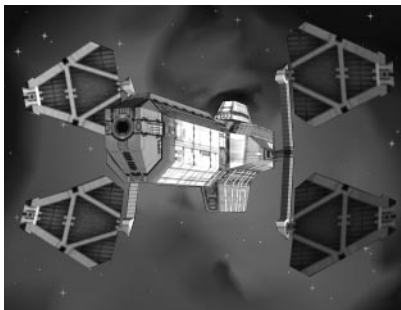
Mass: 13550 tons
Firepower: 3500
Armor: 4800
Coverage: 6%
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 245 m/s

If they had only corvettes and fighters to depend upon, the Turanic Raiders would have been tracked down and destroyed long ago. Unfortunately for most of the civilized races of the galaxy, the Raiders have always had access to the heavy firepower of the Assassin class Ion Array frigate. The Assassin gives the Turanic fleet the ability to go head to head against most enemy fleets, unless super capital ships like Heavy Cruisers become involved.

The Assassin has one of the most distinctive known profiles for a frigate, due to the massive magnetic web arrays it extends when firing. The mag-arrays are a Turanic invention and were designed to add even more striking power to the already awe-inspiring heavy ion beam. This is achieved by focusing magnetic fields on the beam after it leaves the Assassin's hull and accelerating the ion stream even closer to the speed of light. This extra infusion of power lets the Assassin's beam cut through even heavily reinforced hull armor with disturbing ease. The Mag-arrays fold up close to the Assassin's hull when the frigate is not in combat, so as not to be damaged by acceleration and lateral stress from high G turns.

Despite this adaptive design, the Assassin's greatest weakness is still its maneuverability, which is poor even by ion beam frigate standards. Assassins are only employed in the anti-heavy capital ship role, and will damage a ship until it can no longer defend itself, allowing the Thief class corvettes to move in. If an Assassin becomes separated from its fighter support, enemy strike craft can move in and the tables can become quickly turned; in such cases it is the Raider captain who must very quickly choose between surrender and destruction.

"Lord"
Class Attack Carrier

Mass: 109,000 tons
Firepower: 7500
Armor: 58,000
Coverage: 40%
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 235 m/s

The Turanic Raider Lord class Attack Carrier Rancor has the dubious distinction of being the first heavy capital ship to be destroyed in the Homeworld War. The Rancor and her fleet had been ordered by the Imperial Frontier fleet to intercept and destroy any ship attempting to leave the Kharak System. After easily destroying the unarmed research vessel Kar Suliem, the Rancor found herself badly outmatched by the immensely powerful Mothership and was eventually destroyed.

On paper, The Lord class attack carrier is a powerful and inspired design. While small for a carrier—less than half the size of an Empress class Carrier—it is relatively maneuverable, well armored, and carries an ion beam cannon as its main weaponry. This gives it an offensive punch unmatched by any other carrier design currently in production. Unfortunately, in operation these attributes detract from one another, making the Lord the least effective vessel in Turanic operation. While the ion beam is devastating against single targets, it is relatively useless against corvettes and strike craft, and it also robs the Lord's point defense turrets of power in the heat of battle. The higher speed and maneuverability of the Lord is useful when bringing the main gun to bear or entering combat, but it is nearly impossible for Raider pilots to take off or land via the Lord's relatively narrow launch bay while the Carrier is making violent combat maneuvers. The Lord's small size makes it easier to deploy, but the price to be paid is a much smaller and less effective construction bay than that of a standard carrier, and this undermines much of the purpose of fielding a Carrier in the first place.

The Lord class Attack Carrier could be a potent offensive unit if deployed in large attack groups, but this seems to be utterly against Turanic Raider tactical doctrines, which always seem to place the carrier at the rear of any battle. As it is, the Lord line of Carriers will remain a dangerous foe when cornered, but a second-rate ship when on the attack.

"Turanic" Class Raider Outpost

Mass: Unknown
Firepower: Unknown
Armor: Unknown
Coverage: Uknown
Maneuverability: N/A
Max. Velocity: 0 m/s

With the pervasive presence of Turanic Raider fleets throughout most of the galactic frontiers and their increasing presence inside the boundaries of the Old Taiidani Empire, the existence of Raider Outposts is a grim certainty—despite the near complete lack of evidence. Only twice in the past 250 years have deep space Turanic raider bases been discovered and attacked successfully, and both times the outposts have chosen self-destruction over capture. Turanic outposts appear to have no movement capability of their own, but it is theorized that the raiders make use of naturally occurring slipgates to tow these massive structures into hyperspace and so transport them over vast galactic distances, keeping them hidden from pursuing forces.

Currently, Hiigaran Fleet Intelligence suspects that one outpost may be located in the Sheer-ka system, but no reconnaissance in force has been done to confirm this. While it makes good tactical sense to dig out Turanic Raider bases as quickly as they are found, previous attacks have shown that the Raiders will defend their outposts with fanatical fervor, including suicide attacks against enemy frigates. With an enemy ready to use any and all technology and tactics at its disposal, Hiigaran Fleet Command is unwilling to engage in such a costly battle unless a direct strategic threat to Hiigara is discovered. In the meantime, all Kiith Fleet commanders have been made aware of the suspected base location, and warned to give the system a wide birth.

It is not known how well armed these Raider outposts are, or what their armor capabilities may be. It is obvious that their abilities have changed with new technologies over the past two and a half centuries, and any fleet that locates one would be wise to retreat into hyperspace as quickly as possible. If the previous two incidents involving Turanic Outposts are any indication, Raider ships will defend their base in depth and seek to capture as well as destroy as many attackers as possible, until they have either thrown back the attack or self-destructed.

IMPERIALIST TAIIDAN VESSELS

Note: All Taiidani vessels carry the codename given them by Hiigaran Fleet Intelligence.

"Kaark"
Class Attack Bomber

Attack Bomber

Mass: 60 tons
Firepower: 86
Armor: 80
Coverage: 5%
Maneuverability: Medium
Max. Velocity: 650m/s

   Fighters form the backbone of any fleet's fast response arm, but despite the fact that they can engage enemy assets quickly, their effectiveness drops off considerably if capital ships are present. While fighters can carry a variety of kinetic energy loadouts, the most powerful directed-energy system they carry is their own fusion drives. Plasma bomb technology allowed engineers to funnel some of that maneuvering power directly into an attack system. The plasma bomb launcher shunts some of the drive stream directly into the launcher system, effectively bottling high energy plasma inside a shaped magnetic field. The plasma charge moves by venting tiny amounts of the stored energy, allowing it to match speeds with its target, but does not allow for any extreme maneuvers. Once the charge impacts with its target, the front part of the field collapses first, venting all of the high energy plasma directly onto the hull of the enemy ship. Because of its maneuverability limitations, the plasma bomb is nearly useless against strike craft, but is devastatingly effective against capital ships and slow-moving support vessels.

   The Kaark attack bomber carries twin plasma launchers mounted to either side of the dual cockpit, and has a very narrow field of fire. The forward crew position is manned by the pilot, who maneuvers the bomber and sets up the attack run, while the back seat is manned by a combat engineer who monitors the launchers, warns of incoming threats, and activates various ECM systems. The last task is especially important, as the drain on the fusion drive from the launcher systems renders the Kaark slower and less maneuverable than any other strike craft.

"Skaal Tel"
Class Destroyer

Destroyer
Mass: 26,000 tons
Firepower: 7055
Armor: 15000
Coverage: 35%
Maneuverability: Low
Max. Velocity: 295m/s

The Skaal is one of the most deadliest predators that roam the southern wastes of Kharak, and was the greatest threat to the safety of caravans until it was deliberately hunted to the edge of extinction. The male of the species, the Skaal Tel, is a vicious clawed hunter with heavy scales and poison sacks that can blind or kill an unwary opponent at a distance. Though it masses nearly ten times that of an average Taiidani, it is still able to keep up with a warrior at full run. The Skaal Tel hunts for its mate and cubs during the breeding cycle and is capable of dragging its kill back to the den from over a hundred kloms away.

This predator is a fitting namesake for one of the deadliest vessels ever built for the Taiidani fleet. The Skaal Tel is so massive it mounts two parallel Ion cannons and backs this up with 4 heavy rail guns on 2 modified turrets. Second only to Heavy Cruisers in terms of raw firepower, the Skaal Tel Destroyer can direct a devastating amount of destructive energy in its forward arc, and two destroyers operating in concert can vaporize an enemy frigate in a matter of seconds. Yet, despite its size and armor, it can maneuver almost as well as the much smaller Frigates.

To successfully engage a Skaal Tel, you must learn from the warriors who hunted its namesake on ancient Kharak. Attack in a group, from all sides, and use your fastest and most maneuverable assets to draw the beast's attention while you concentrate your attacks on its flanks.

"Skaal Fa" Class Missile Destroyer

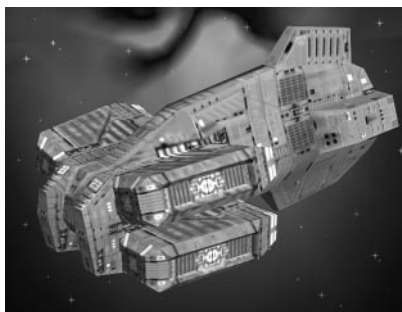Missile Destroyer

Mass: 28,000 tons
Firepower: 4550
Armor: 12,500
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: Low
Max. Velocity: 295m/s

The guided missile has long been a forgotten weapon in space combat. Small cheap missiles lacked the warhead strength and range to be a factor, while missiles large enough to be a threat simply could not be carried in large enough numbers on even capital ships to make it worth the time and resources. Taiidani Engineers finally made a tactical breakthrough by applying the automated construction bay technologies used in the Mothership and, to a lesser extent, in Saarkin Cho Class Carriers. Skaal Fa's use the standard Destroyer hull, but replace the Ion Cannon systems with an automated assembly bay, capable of building a heavy missile armed with a fusion warhead every 5 seconds. A dual rail missile launcher is mounted on either side of the forward hull where the standards weapon bays used to be,

Skaal Fa's have the best stand-off range of any ship in the fleet, but are vulnerable once their initial load of 32 missiles has been launched, and their rate of fire drops to how fast they can manufacture new missiles. Skaal Fa's usually operate with one or two Skaal Tel class Destroyers, and standard procedure is for the Tel's to engage and pin a large enemy vessel, while the Missile destroyer stays back and pummels it with long range missile fire. Since the Skaal Fa carries no turrets, it is almost always deployed with a wing of Interceptors flying close escort to ward off enemy strike craft.

On Kharak, the Skaal Fal is the female of the Skaal species, and, while smaller and somewhat more vulnerable during the breeding season than the male, sports a tail covered with hardened spines which she can fling at an attacker with deadly force from the safety of her lair.

"Tiirshak"
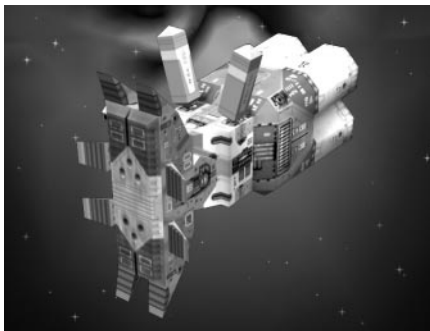# Class
Salvage Corvette

Salvage Corvette
Mass: 900 tons
Firepower: 125
Armor: 1100
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: Medium
Max. Velocity: 450m/s

The Tiirshak class Salvage Corvette is filled with advanced computers embodying AI-driven decryption and virus routines that give these vessels the ability to subvert and over-ride another ship's command systems. While these subversion routines will probably only work on badly damaged ships, it gives a Tiirshak the ability to tow in enemy ships to be studied and retro-fitted for Taiidani use.

The ship is named for Tiirshak Sjet, the famous Taiidani scholar who turned his back not only on his Kiith but on his entire race, in order to wander the deserts in search of insight. The Salvage corvette is meant to operate in much the same way, alone and undefended in places where the situation is not fully known. In most cases, a heavy fighter escort would draw too much attention to the salvage corvette's mission, and so they usually operate alone, or with one or two Fiirkan scout fighters. Salvage crews face an dangerous and unglamorous job and in many Taiidani fleets, a tour of duty aboard a Tiirshak is considered disciplinary action.

"Diirvaas" Class Multi-Gun Corvette

Multi-Gun Corvette

Mass: 750 tons
Firepower: 380
Armor: 700
Coverage: 78%
Maneuverability: Medium
Max. Velocity: 600 m/s

The major weakness of frigates and larger capitol ships is that generally their weapons are designed to engage ships of analogous size and function. Heavy turrets can punch gaping holes in an enemy cruiser, but they must rely on pure luck to hit high maneuverability targets. This leaves heavier ships very vulnerable to massed attacks by strike craft. While fielding large numbers of defensive fighters is the immediate answer to this problem, Fleet Command realized that fighters are better used in the offensive role and so an order for some sort of larger anti-fighter platform was placed. Fleet Engineers soon settled on a corvette hull as an ideal platform, mixing moderate speed and maneuverability with enough armor to survive in the thick of battle.

While designing the chassis was relatively simple, implementing a fire control system capable of handling the 6 articulated turrets called for in the specs required intensive software development. Other problems involved the reliability of the high-speed turrets under constant use, and finally engineers had to abandon traditional hydraulic turrets and replace them with a maglev system based on super-conducting polymers. This system worked beyond expectation, allowing for high-speed target acquisition without increased wear and heat build-up in the turret assembly. The only drawback was that the incredibly high torque generated by the turrets can sometimes overwhelm the Corvette's gyro-stabilizers, and inexperienced pilots can find themselves tumbling uncontrollably through space until they can reset the turrets.

While it required a long and difficult design process, the resulting corvette, code-named Diirvass after the ancient discipline of sword-dancing, was finally commissioned. It has performed admirably in combat. Diirvass class corvettes will often be found operating close in beside Sajuuk Cor class Ion Beam Frigates, protecting their vulnerable flanks from enemy fighters.

"Tiifal"
Class
Defence Field Frigate

Defense Field Frigate

Mass: 13,000 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 4400
Coverage: 100%
Maneuverability: Low
Max. Velocity: 325m/s

With the success of the Koshiir Ra Defense fighter, it was natural for Taiidani engineers to try and develop a more effective defense technology. The Tiifal uses a frigate hull and power plant to support a full array of Electromagnetic emitters that cover a complete sphere around the ship. While the power drain of supporting this many emitters leaves little left for maneuvering, the maximum coverage means that the Tiifal has no vulnerable facing to take advantage of.

While the EM emitters can deflect incoming high-speed projectiles, the field is not strong enough to affect energy-based weapons such as Ion Beams and Mines. Enemy missiles with their relatively slow speed and advanced ECM equipment can penetrate the EM field, so Tiifals must avoid Missile Destroyers and beam-equipped capitol ships at all costs.

To compensate for their vulnerability, Tiifal crews train to approach larger ships from the flanks in order to shut down enemy turret fire and avoid forward-mounted beams and missiles. Offensively, Tiifals are often used to lead the final assaults against enemy carriers and motherships, where their anti-munitions field can utterly shut down the target's point-defense guns, allowing friendly fighters to strafe and bomb with impunity.

"Sajuuk Cor" Class Ion Beam Frigate
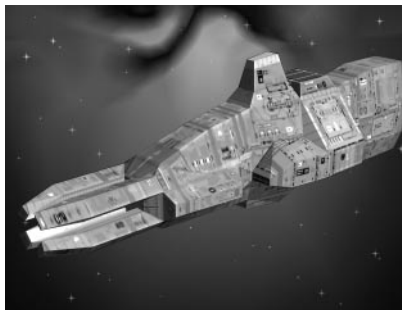
Ion Cannon Frigate

Mass: 13,000 tons
Firepower: 3040
Armor: 4200
Coverage: 2%
Maneuverability: Low
Max. Velocity: 300m/s

The Ion Beam is the single most powerful weapon technology developed by Taiidani science. The frigate hull can barely support the entire length of the particle acceleration unit, but it offers the quickest and most economical way to put this devastating weapon into battle.

The design sequence was so rapid that the frigate entered frontline service still under its project name, 'Weapon X', but within days of its first combat trials, crews had renamed the frigate 'Sajuuk Cor'—an ancient phrase that translates roughly into "God's Wrath". Given the power of the weapon system, Sajuuk Cor crews were drawn only from veteran personnel, and quickly became some of the most driven members of the Fleet. Where the obvious vulnerabilities of a ship with only one forward firing weapon would dictate cautious deployment, Beam frigate crews operate as hunter/killers, and will often plow their frigates through formations of enemy fighters in order to pin a capitol ship in a web of deadly blue-white cutting beams. While this tactic can be devastatingly effective, it drastically lowers the survivability of the beam frigates and, despite numerous disciplinary charges against zealous captains, there seems to be no increase in caution amongst Sajuuk Cor crews. Attempts to mix in greener or more cautious personnel has either had no effect, or produced an unacceptable drop in combat efficiency.

As a result, fleet commanders have no choice but to assign escort vessels like Diirvass corvettes and Tiifal defense frigates to cover the Sajuuk Cors as they dive into the thick of things, hunting the largest enemy vessels on the scope.

"Variis"
Class
Proximity Sensor

Proximity Sensor

Mass: 47 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 600
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: Very high
Max. Velocity: 1000m/s

    The Variis proximity sensor is a package of the most sophisticated Taidanii sensors mounted on a simple, but reliable, mini-fusion drive. Variis not only have extensive sensing ranges, but also have a very small visual and electronic silhouette themselves, making them difficult to spot and destroy in combat. Much more advanced than simple probes, the Variis drones have expert systems onboard which are so sophisticated that they can even track anomalies against the background radiation of space itself. This means that a Variis can locate Kushan cloaked fighters, by virtue of the fact that they leave 'holes' in space. Software engineers have upgraded these sensor anomalies to target status, so that a web of Variis proximity sensors can now track incoming cloaked ships and pass that information to Fleet Command.

    This ability to see cloaked ships makes the Variis a prime target, but their relatively low production cost and the extended range of their sensors means that most commanders can easily set up overlapping fields of sensors. Enemy attempts to punch a hole through the sensor web by destroying all the Variis in a certain sector is an obvious indication the vector an enemy attack will be on.
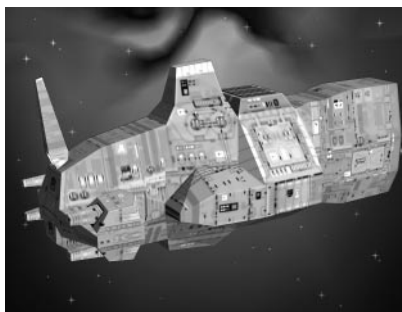
"Kudaark"
Class Assault Frigate

Mass: 15,000 tons
Firepower: 2548
Armor: 4500
Coverage: 75%
Maneuverability: Low
Max. Velocity: 325m/s

    The Kudaark Class of assault frigates are the workhorses of the Taidani fleet. Their four heavy turrets give excellent coverage, while dual forward-facing plasma bomb launchers give it the ability to devastate any capital ship in its path. Directly behind the massive engine housing is the only arc where the Kudaark is incapable of directing any sort of firepower. This, and the relatively slow tracking of the turret guns, means that despite its heavy offensive punch and deep armor plating, the Kudarrk should not be deployed without an escort of fighters or multi-gun corvettes.

    The Kudaark is named after a large burrower from the northern forests of Taiidan. In addition to its immense claws and surly disposition, the creature also has an array of spines along its snout which it can expel in a painful barbed cloud. Since the array of heavy turrets on the Taidan assault frigate is arranged around the nose section, it made for a logical comparison, as approaching the creature or the frigate head-on is a definite tactical error, which one only makes once. The forward weapon placement was intended to give the Assault Frigate maximum firepower when attempting to punch through enemy formations. The standard maneuver is for 3 Kudaarks to blast their way past an enemy fleet, and then wheel around quickly to bring their heavy firepower to bear from the opposite quarter while keeping their vulnerable rear arc away from hostile guns.

    The assault Frigate carries a double-size crew and substantial quarters, allowing it to conduct long-range strike operations for weeks at a time, while still remaining at full combat efficiency.

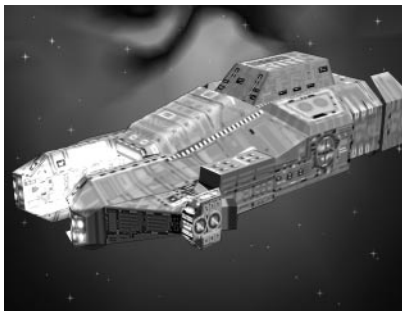# "Saarkin Cho" Class Carrier

Mass: 121,000 tons
Firepower: 4000
Armor: 60,000
Coverage: 75%
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 300 m/s

The Saarkin Cho class carrier has been in continuous service for nearly 90 years (galactic standard) at this point, and due to the fall of the Taiidan Empire it seems unlikely that it will be replaced in front line service anytime soon. The Saarkin Cho was designed at the height of Taiidani power, and was meant to function as the core of every Taiidani Naval task force throughout the empire. At the Empire's fall there were 137 Saarkin Cho on active duty, and by the time the ashes of the civil war cooled approximately 70 of these heavy carriers were still active, 19 of these flying the colors of the Imperialist faction.

The Saarkin Cho was designed to be a fast deployment Carrier with enough construction capacity to replace any expected combat losses up to and including frigate class vessels. The Hangar bay is aligned forward and opens directly into the repair/construction bay, allowing strike craft to come directly off the manufacturing line and into combat. Taiidani strike pilots often joke about being aboard before the cockpit can cool. The forward launching bay is double-wide and allows for the simultaneous launch and recovery of two full strike wings while the carrier itself is maneuvering at full combat speed.

In combat the Saarkin Cho has performed admirably and was virtually undefeated until the Homeworld war and the Taiidani civil war that followed. Recent reports indicate that the Imperialist navy has upgraded the Saarkin Cho's point defense mass drivers to high energy tracking plasma. If this is true, this Carrier has become extremely dangerous to attacking strike craft. Hiigaran intelligence recommends that any fleet encountering a Saarkin Cho Class Carrier should only engage it with a full attack squadron backed up by multiple frigate class or above vessels. If strike craft must attack without support, it is advised that they make their attack runs from the forward quadrant, where the defense turrets cannot track properly, and direct their fire into the lightly armored launch bay.

"Heeshk"
Class Support Frigate

Mass: 12,500 tons
Firepower: 2000
Armor: 3800
Coverage: 50%
Maneuverability: medium
Max. Velocity: 450 m/s

   With the advent of high efficiency strike craft drives in both the Republican and Imperialist fleets, the Heeshk class support frigate has begun to fade from front line service. Originally intended to refuel and repair up to four corvettes and 10 fighters simultaneously, the Heeshk has been relegated to rear area repair duty. The Imperial variant of this aging design has a reinforced upper hull deck, achieved by removing the plasma ducting that was used for refueling fighters and replacing it with an extra layer of ablative armor and dynamic anti-breaching systems.

   Republican fleets have retired this vessel to base repair duty, but Imperialists often do not have the luxury of pulling even an obsolete design off the line. Imperialist admirals will often order a pair of Heeshk class frigates to escort a larger battle group into the thick of battle, repairing other vessels even as they take fire. Their ability to repair more powerful capital ships makes them a naturally first target for swirling fighters and corvettes, but the modern Heeshk's heavier armor allows them to survive for far longer than a smaller repair corvette.

   When engaging a Heeshk class repair frigate, it is important to stay out of the firing arc of the frigate's one large cannon. While this gun packs a serious punch, it is not accurate against strike craft and is intended to support more offensive combat vessels, or ward off single attacking frigates. Heeshks are often deployed in pairs so that one can repair the other and vice-versa, should the two frigates need to stall for time until help arrives.

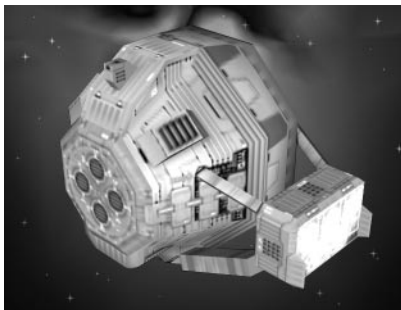# "Koraal" Class GravWell Frigate

Mass: 10,500 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 3400
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: low
Max. Velocity: 325 m/s

The Koraal gravity generator vessel was designed by the pro-capital ship faction of Taiidani Fleet Command, who felt that having to train endless pilots to fight in fragile-but-expensive strike craft in order to protect against other small, fragile ships was wasteful of both life and resources. When high-speed turrets failed to be the final answer in point defense, Taiidani field-effect scientists went to work trying to end the strike craft threat once and for all.

Their solution was to construct a frigate class vessel around a massive Gravitic field generator, which was capable a generating a field strong enough to seize any strike craft within range and hold it still in space until it could be targeted by heavy turrets and destroyed. Their initial success was impressive, and soon they were able to launch a prototype vessel that could generate an artificial gravity well strong enough to overwhelm the thrust of anything smaller than a Frigate engine.

Unfortunately this technology arrived just as the Homeworld War began, and there was no time or resources left to perfect the technology; the prototype went into full production as the Koraal class Gravwell Frigate. The Energy demands of the graviton generator are still so high that the fusion drives soon overload from the power drain, rendering the ship useless in a very short time. It takes nearly 3 work cycles to tow the Koraal back into a carrier or base, strip out and replace the drive, and then recondition the graviton unit; the extreme stress of the grav field also makes it impossible for turrets or any kind of weapon to function on the Koraal's outer hull.

Despite this, the Koraal is a deadly surprise for any wing of strike craft, and Imperialist fleets often use them to ambush Republican and Hiigaran resourcing fleets. This tactic has resulted in a near 100% success rate, until the Imperialist encountered a Kiith Somtaaw mining fleet containing Minion class heavy tugs. As the grav field built up and locked up the acolyte escort wing, a fast thinking Minion crew rammed the Koraal and pushed it out of effective range. The repeated impacts eventually destroyed the graviton generator.

"Seejur"
Class Heavy Defender

Mass: 70 tons
Firepower: 190
Armor: 78
Coverage: 70%
Maneuverability: high
Max. Velocity: 385 m/s

The Seejur was an ancient combat shield from the early Kiith wars on Kharak. It is meant to be worn strapped to the forearm, and has three sharp spikes mounted along the rim and pointed forward. This allowed skilled warriors to block a critical blow and then drive the sharpened spikes into the enemy with the same motion. When Hiigaran fleet intelligence first studied combat data concerning the triple-gunned Taiidani Defense fighter, "Seejur" was an obvious code-name for this heavily armed and armored fighter.

The Seejur is designed to stay with larger frigate- and destroyer-class ships in tight guard formation. Its triple rapid-fire rail guns are optimized to deliver a large number of high-speed armor-piercing rounds against small, fast-moving targets. The Seejur shunts nearly 50% of its drive plasma into its maneuvering vents, giving it the ability to rotate on its center of gravity at amazing speeds, and this allows a pilot to bring the Seejur's guns to bear anywhere in its combat sphere in less than a second. Unfortunately, this rotational speed has been achieved at the cost of main drive power, and the Seejur is very slow for a fighter, causing many to refer to it as a free-range turret.

Seejurs function well in their primary role as a close support escort for larger vessels, but often take terrible losses as any incoming fighter wing will automatically target the Defense Fighters to clear the way for incoming bombers and attack corvettes. The Seejur can deliver withering fire against the first few fighters entering their range, but their low speed makes them a sitting target as larger numbers of fighters sweep in at high speed. Despite the high rate of fire of the triple rail guns, the advantage in fighter combat goes with the faster ship, and the Seejur's only hope of survival is to throw back the attackers in the initial barrage.

Standard Hiigaran attack doctrine concerning Seejurs is to attack in tight formation and concentrate on one vessel at a time.

"Triikor"
Heavy Interceptor

Mass: 60 tons
Firepower: 75
Armor: 72
Coverage: 6%
Maneuverability: very high
Max. Velocity: 775 m/s

The Taiidani heavy Interceptor, code-named "Triikor" after the Kharakian predator cat, is one of the most feared silhouettes throughout the Galaxy's Spinward sectors. The Triikor was the natural evolution of the Fiirkan scout, but whereas the Fiirkan sacrifices firepower for speed, the Triikor is almost as fast, achieving a level of threat matched only by the relatively recent development of the Hiigaran Blade fighter.

Taiidani Fleet commanders asked for a next generation fighter built around a ultra-high velocity rail gun. Initial designs placed this large weapon in a spinal mount, but the resulting fighter was slow and easily damaged, with most of its crucial function placed in a thin layer around the weapon. In an innovative move, a rarity among engineers who labored under Imperial tyranny during the pre-Republic era, the designers of the Triikor decided to create a pure maneuvering fighter and then place the weapon on a lateral mount. The result is a unique looking fighter that is tricky to fly but deadly in the hands of a skilled pilot.

The laterally mounted rail gun gives the Triikor a center of gravity shifted a full meter from the cockpit/engine line, and this gives the fighter some very interesting handling characteristics while rolling or turning. Novice pilots are given a wide berth when flying formation, as this arrangement causes the fighter to swing wildly under high-G maneuvers until the pilot is intimate with this unusual center of gravity. But in the hands of an inexperienced pilot, this initial disadvantage becomes a dogfighter's dream, as the right touch can make the Triikor wheel around nearly twice as fast as standard fighter designs. A wide barrel roll maneuver unique to this fighter is known as "rolling the gun", and is used by Triikor aces to roll out of the gunsights of a pursuer while braking to end up just behind and below the surprised enemy. Many a Hiigaran pilot's last words have been a surprised curse as a Triikor rolls out of her sights and tears the bottom of her ship to shreds a moment later.

"Wodaan" Class Minelayer corvette

Mass: 820 tons
Firepower: -
Armor: 1250
Coverage: -
Maneuverability: medium
Max. Velocity: 425 m/s

The Wodaan class of minelayer corvettes is a venerable design with a long and checkered history. Originally the Wodaan was intended as an electronic warfare vessel, but countermeasures were always one step behind sensor adaptation, to the point that Taiidan Fleet Command canceled the project. The Wodaan corvette hull plans lay abandoned for almost 20 years until plasma research made it possible to create and load high-energy tracking mines with a small and efficient PDA unit. Instead of designing a new dedicated minelayer hull from scratch, engineers merely removed the complex EW warfare suite and replaced it with the mine-laying unit. The resulting corvette functioned well enough to satisfy the design requirements and was commissioned into full service.

Unfortunately for the 3 man Wodaan crew (1 pilot, 1 WO and 1 engineer to maintain the Mine PDA) "well enough" still left plenty of room for system quirks which make service aboard the minelayer ships "interesting" at best. Jamming in the mine launch system is still chronic, despite numerous overhaul and equipment changes, and it is not rare for a new crew to be lost as the jammed mine goes active while still in the launcher.

Taiidani commanders usually deploy Wodaans in four-ship wings that lay down their mines in standard grid pattern. When attacked, a Wodaan wing will immediately try and circle the enemy vessels, while dropping as many mines as possible. The Mk 12 tracking shock mine uses plasma polarity to lock onto an enemy ship's electromagnetic cross signature, and then vents a tiny portion of its plasma warhead to accelerate rapidly towards its target. The range of the Mk 12 mine is a few hundred kloms, and it is highly recommended that when using fighters to sweep such a minefield that they use full evasion tactics in very loose formation.

"Qwaar-Jet"
Class Heavy Cruiser

Mass: 131,000 tons
Firepower: 20,000
Armor: 75,000
Coverage: 30%
Maneuverability: very low
Max. Velocity: 250 m/s

During the dark days of ancient Kharak, Qwaar-Jet was the ancient God of Pain and Enslavement on Kharak, and so it was only fitting that Hiigaran Fleet Intelligence give this code-name to the most powerful warship currently used by Taiidani forces, both Republican and Imperial. During the pre-Republican Era, Qwaar-Jet cruiser squadrons terrorized entire Star Systems into submission at the Emperor's command. Even in the aftermath of the Taiidani Civil war, the Qwaar-Jet has lost none of its fearful reputation, despite having met its match in the Hiigaran Avatar class heavy cruiser and Kiith Somtaaw's Archangel class Dreadnought.

The Qwaar-Jet packs a lethal punch, with 4 heavy ion beams firing from massive turrets, giving them unheard-of coverage. This is backed up by 4 assault-class mass drivers, mounted over-under fashion along the sides. This arrangement allows the heavy cruiser to direct withering fire against other slow-moving capital ships, even as it maneuvers at combat speed. While the Qwaar-Jet, like most capital ships, has trouble engaging fast-moving strike craft, its incredibly thick armor allows it to ignore anything less than a massed Plasma Bomber attack.

Since the end of the Homeworld War, the Qwaar-Jet has been upgraded as conditions and technology present themselves, and Hiigaran commanders facing Imperialist forces can expect to see Qwaar-Jets that may be equipped with energy cannons and reinforced reactive armor. In their current undeclared guerrilla war against Hiigara and the Taiidan Republic, the Imperial Navy seems to be using its remaining Qwaar-Jet cruisers in hunter/killer pairs that use sheer brute force to punch through enemy picket ships and destroy the carriers at the center of any fleet group. It is not known whether this tactic is simply part of a war of attrition, or if it is the prelude to a deadly phase of new aggression.

THE BEAST

The subversion entity threatening the galaxy has been code-named The Beast by Hiigaran Intelligence, for reasons that quickly become obvious when one views the combat tapes taken by allied ships as they struggle to defend themselves from this vicious threat. Currently there seems to be no defense against the beam used by Beast heavy vessels to infect and consume our ships. As such, the Beast fleet is composed of literally whatever Taiidan, Turanic or Hiigaran vessels have been unlucky enough to cross paths with it. Only two ships seem to be fabricated from primarily Beast technology, these being the command vessel known as the Beast Mothership, and a small kamikaze corvette known as the Cruise Missile.

Once a ship is subverted, it is not known exactly what changes are made in performance and firepower, but initial analysis indicates that while the transformed ships are slightly slower than their un-infected counterparts, they have an added layer of organic armor. Unsubstantiated reports claim that this armor layer can regenerate over time, if damaged; this may also be true of intricate systems and drives aboard a Beast vessel. If the Beast is capable of healing itself, Allied Commanders are warned to engage and destroy any Beast vessel as quickly as possible; any cripples should be finished off before they can heal.

Note: Most of these stats are largely conjecture, drawn from intelligence reports and known information about the base specs of the subverted ships. All information regarding the mass, speed, armor, and weaponry of these Beast ships cannot be confirmed at this time and may differ greatly as reported here.

The Beast Mothership

Mass: 565,000 tons
Firepower: 4600
Armor: 94,000
Coverage: 80%
Maneuverability: very low
Max. Velocity: 110 m/s
Special Action: Infect

Based on parts of a Somtaaw Explorer Class Mining ship, the Beast Mothership is more mutation than star-ship. How the Beast can warp plasteel and plasma conduits across nearly a kilometer of hull isn't truly understood, but the results are obvious. High-speed deep scan passes by Seeker class fighters have revealed the outer hull to be some kind of organic armor, laced with depleted uranium and superconductor fiber. This duplicates the best anti-kinetic armor we have and combines it with enough energy dissipation capability to seriously downgrade the damage of ion beams and plasma-based weaponry.

Analysis of combat behavior seems to indicate that the Beast Mothership behaves like a living thing, concentrating its strength in certain areas for a limited time before "exhausting" itself. So, like an athlete pushing himself hard, the Beast Mothership seems capable of shunting power to its maneuver drives and other systems: it can build ships faster, research faster, or even fire faster, for a limited period of time. During this time the hull appears to degrade slowly, as if the Beast is weakening somehow from the strain of shunting power to these subsystems.

The Beast Mothership is a full-fledged construction class vessel. It is capable of simultaneously building over a dozen different types of strike craft and frigates, along with being able to build super capital ship

hulls externally. Current intelligence indicates the Beast Mothership can build its own variants of the Taiidani Qwaar-Jet Heavy Cruiser and the dreaded Saarkin-Cho Carrier. When the Beast takes over a new kind of vessel, encountering technology It has never seen before, It brings the ship in to dock and basically absorbs it, seemingly to learn the new design or technology. From that point on, It can incorporate those technologies into new designs—or even order Its ships in the field to grow the new parts themselves.

Offensively, the Beast Mothership has 6 heavy turrets in excellent coverage positions. The heaviest fire can be directed below and to the sides of the Mothership, while strike craft will have the highest chance of surviving a pass from head-on and slightly above. Of course, should an allied ship survive the defensive turret fire, an even deadlier fate awaits any ship closing in past 10 kloms; this is the estimated maximum range of the Beast Mothership's infection beam. The Beast seems to be able to fire this beam approximately once every 90 seconds, and can use the beam to infect a mass equivalent to two frigate hulls. Given that the charged beam can leap from ship to ship across hard vacuum, an entire flight of fighters can be taken over in one shot. This attack is so devastating that many allied pilots have equipped their strike craft with deadman switches that cause the drives to overload and detonate before the beast virus can tear the pilot apart. The Beast Heavy Cruiser and Carrier also carry Infection beams, though they seem to be lesser versions with shorter ranges and longer recharge time.

With all this power at its disposal, there is no question that the Beast Mothership is currently the most dangerous vessel in the Galaxy. It is not just a starship. It is a plague come for us all.

Required Tech -   NONE

Upgrade Tech -   BEAST INFECT WEAPON
                         CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
                         SUPPORT SYSTEMS
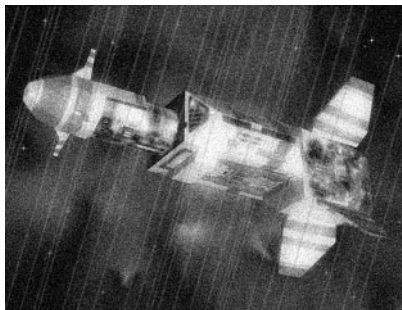   ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Cruise Missile

Firepower: —
Coverage: —
Maneuverability: HIGH
Armor: 68
Max. Velocity: 650 m/s
Mass: 490 TONS
Special Action: None

The Beast cruise Missile was first seen in Seera Tel system, when a Kiith Manaan frigate squadron sent a frantic message that it was under attack by unknown drone craft. When no further word was received, Manaan Fleet Command sent in a full carrier group to investigate, but initially all that was found was the wreckage of one assault frigate; the remaining four ion beam frigates were nowhere to be found. Eventually a lone escape pod was found with one alive but nearly insane Manaani bridge officer aboard. When an psi-tech was finally able to piece her psyche back together again, the mystery was finally solved. It seems that soon after issuing the report, the incoming drones closed at ramming speed too fast for the ion beam frigates to track. As the drones impacted, it became obvious they were huge missiles carrying a warhead of Beast plasma; the missiles blew through the frigate's hull, the plasma warhead burst, and the infection spread through the ship in seconds, subverting the ship and dissolving her crew. The battle took less than 2 minutes, as the three infected ion frigates turned on the one assault frigate that had managed to destroy the cruise missile targeted on it before impact. The lone surviving officer had been shoved into an escape pod by her Captain, along with the battle telemetry; she was ejected moments before the last frigate was cut to pieces.

The Beast cruise missile is nearly the size of a corvette, and packs a high thrust drive capable of pushing the missile to near fighter speeds. While not a threat by itself, the Beast tends to use these missiles in massed attacks, either forming multiple vectors or one vector which is likely to be missed in the middle of a massive battle. Both tactics minimize the chance of successful interception, and any fleet that does not keep up constant combat patrols can find itself in deadly danger. Sentinel shields are no defense against the Beast missiles; the drone's organic tip absorbs the field charge and allows the missile to slip through.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                      MISSILE LAUNCHER
                      BIO-WARHEAD
                      BEAST INFECT WEAPON

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                      ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Interceptor

FIREPOWER: 65
COVERAGE: 5%
MANEUVERABILITY: VERY HIGH
ARMOR: 85
MAX VELOCITY: 810 m/s
MASS: 90 TONS
Special Action: None

Stats based on specs of unsubverted Turanic Interceptor. -
See page 101 for more information on the Turanic Interceptor.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE

Upgrade Tech -   LINKING TECHNOLOGY (upgrade/captured)
                 ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                 ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Cloaked Fighter

FIREPOWER: 75
COVERAGE: 5%
MANEUVERABILITY: VERY HIGH
ARMOR: 80
MAX VELOCITY: 750 m/s
MASS: 90 TONS
Special Action: Cloak

With cloaking sails active, the Kushan Cloaked Fighter is the stealthiest ship around. Highly useful for simple sur-
veillance, the Cloaked Fighter is also a good attack craft. It must, however, de-cloak to fire, making it vulnerable
for a short period of time.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                 CLOAKING ABILITY

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                 ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
                 ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Attack Bomber

FIREPOWER: 86
COVERAGE: 5%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 90
MAX VELOCITY: 640 m/s
MASS: 60 TONS
Special Action: None

A technological advance created plasma bomb technology small enough to fit in a Fighter-sized craft. The Taiidan Attack Bomber was born. While its slow-moving plasma bombs can be outrun by Fighter class ships, they make short work of Frigates and other Capital Ships. See page 107 for more information on the Taiidan Attack Bomber.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                         PLASMA BOMB LAUNCHER

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Multigun Corvette

FIREPOWER: 380
COVERAGE: 78%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 730
MAX VELOCITY: 570 m/s
MASS: 750 TONS
Special Action: None

Following advances in turrets and auto-targeting, the Taiidan Multi-Gun Corvette was conceived. It sports a full six articulating turrets. This allows it to track numerous fast-moving targets at once, making it especially deadly against large groups of Fighter class ships. See page 111 for more information on the Taiidan Multigun Corvette.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                         FAST TRACKING TURRETS
Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)
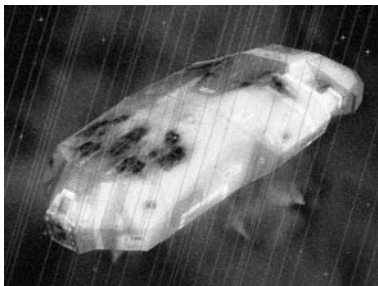
Beast Heavy Corvette

Mass: 750 tons
Firepower: 200
Armor: 1700
Coverage: 50%
Maneuverability: Medium
Max. Velocity: 550m/s
Special Action: None

More armored than its light cousin, the Kushan Heavy Corvette adds a second high-powered turret to an already powerful craft. Its turrets allow the Heavy Corvette to track two Fighters at once and also make it a moderate threat to Capital Ships.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                   HEAVY CORVETTE UPGRADE

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                   ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
                   ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

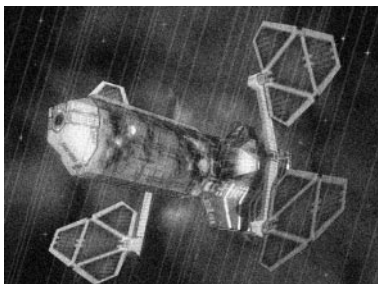# Beast Ion Array Frigate

FIREPOWER: 3,500
COVERAGE: 6%
MANEUVERABILITY: LOW
ARMOR: 5,100
MAX VELOCITY: 230 m/s
MASS: 13,550 TONS
Special Action: Cloak

Stats based on specs of unsubverted Dagger class ion frigate. The few close-range sensor records available on a Beast subverted Ion Array Frigate indicate an anomalous energy signature, though what is causing this signature is unknown. See page 104 for more information on the Turanic Ion Array Frigate.

Required Tech -   FRIGATE DRIVE
                   ADVANCED ION CANNON

Upgrade Tech -   CLOAKING ABILITY
                   ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                   ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Defense Field Frigate
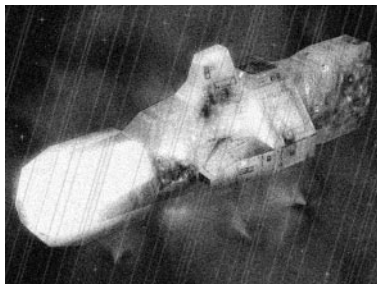
FIREPOWER: —
COVERAGE: 100%
MANEUVERABILITY: LOW
ARMOR: 4650
MAX VELOCITY: 310 m/s
MASS: 13,000 TONS
Special Action: None

Like the Defense Fighter, the Defense Field Frigate has no attack capability. It can, however, deflect almost 100 percent of all oncoming enemy fire, with the exception of ion beams, mines, and missiles.

Required Tech -	FRIGATE DRIVE
	DEFENSE FIELD
Upgrade Tech -	ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
	ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Heavy Cruiser

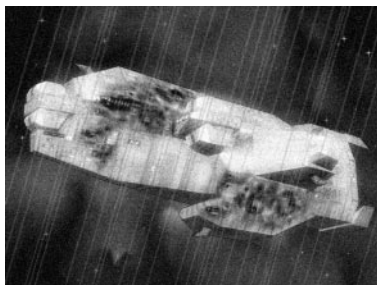**FIREPOWER:** 20,000
COVERAGE: 30%
MANEUVERABILITY: VERY LOW
ARMOR: 77,000
MAX VELOCITY: 245 m/s
MASS: 131,000 TONS
Special Action: Infect

The goliath of Capital Ships, this bruiser carries four twin-mounted ion cannons and six heavy turrets, each almost half the size of an entire Frigate. When a Heavy Cruiser shows up on the scene, things get really quiet really fast.

Required Tech -	DESTROYER DRIVE
	HEAVY GUNS
	ADVANCED ION CANNON
Upgrade Tech -	ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
	ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
	BEAST INFECT WEAPON
	ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Carrier

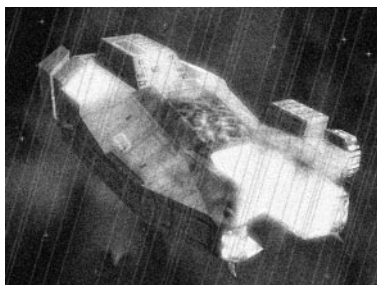**FIREPOWER:** 4,000
COVERAGE: 75%
MANEUVERABILITY: low
ARMOR: 65,000
MAX VELOCITY: 290 m/s
MASS: 121,000 TONS
Special Action: Infect

A veritable feat of engineering, the Carrier incorporates an entire construction center, capable of building up to Frigate-class ships. In addition, a huge docking array provides space for up to 50 Fighters and 25 Corvettes. Its rapid-fire deck guns give it adequate defense. See page 116 for more information on the Taiidan Carrier.

Required Tech -   DESTROYER DRIVE

Upgrade Tech -   CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
                         ADVANCED DESTROYER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ENERGY CANNONS (upgrade/captured)
                         BEAST INFECT WEAPON
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Missile Corvette

FIREPOWER: 320
COVERAGE: 60%
MANEUVERABILITY: HIGH
ARMOR: 1400
MAX VELOCITY: 490 m/s
MASS: 775 TONS
Special Action: None

Stats based on specs of unsubverted Turanic Missile Corvette. - See page 103 for more information on the Turanic Missile Corvette.

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                         MISSILE LAUNCHER

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Created from field reports from Naabal and Soban commanders, this list outlines Somtaaw ship types that are confirmed as subverted and put into production by the Beast. Ship specs for these vessels are detailed and length elsewhere.
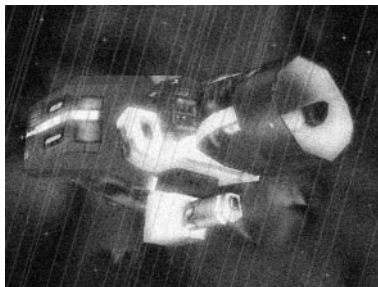
Beast Recon

FIREPOWER: 40
COVERAGE: 4%
MANEUVERABILITY: VERY HIGH
ARMOR: 30
MAX VELOCITY: 1000 m/s
MASS: 41 TONS

Required Tech -   NONE

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED SENSORS
                        ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                        ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Acolyte

FIREPOWER: 85
COVERAGE: 6%
MANEUVERABILITY: VERY HIGH
ARMOR: 80
MAX VELOCITY: 800 m/s
MASS: 90 TONS

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE

Upgrade Tech -   LINKING TECHNOLOGY (upgrade/captured)
                        ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                        ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast ACV

FIREPOWER: 170
COVERAGE: 6%
MANEUVERABILITY: HIGH
ARMOR: 160
MAX VELOCITY: 580 m/s
MASS: 180 TONS

Required Tech -   FIGHTER DRIVE
                         LINKING TECHNOLOGY (captured)

Upgrade Tech -   E.M.P. WEAPON (upgrade/captured)
                         ADVANCED FIGHTER DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Multi-Beam Frigate

FIREPOWER: 3900
COVERAGE: 90%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 4200
MAX VELOCITY: 330 m/s
MASS: 10200 TONS

Required Tech -   FRIGATE DRIVE
                         ADVANCED ION CANNON

Upgrade Tech -   ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                         ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)
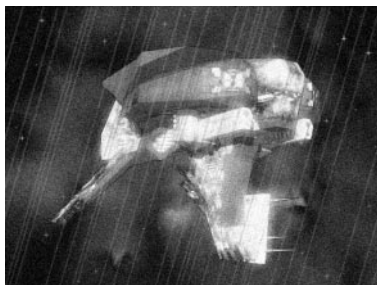
Beast Hive Frigate

FIREPOWER: 1400
COVERAGE: 12%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 4000
MAX VELOCITY: 345 m/s
MASS: 9900 TONS

Required Tech -   FRIGATE DRIVE

Upgrade Tech -   MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION (captured)
                       ADVANCED FRIGATE DRIVE (upgrade/captured)
                       ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Heavy Tug [Ramming Frigate]

FIREPOWER: 2500
COVERAGE: 6%
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 5,100
MAX VELOCITY: 378 m/s
MASS: 12900 TONS

Required Tech -   AFTERBURNER (upgrade/captured)

Upgrade Tech -   ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)
                       REPAIR BOTS (upgrade/captured)

Beast Worker

FIREPOWER: —
COVERAGE: —
MANEUVERABILITY: MEDIUM
ARMOR: 1,800
MAX VELOCITY: 365 m/s
MASS: 5,200 TONS

Required Tech -   NONE
Upgrade Tech -   REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade/captured)
                    SALVAGING ABILITY (upgrade/captured)
                    ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Processor

MASS: 89,000 TONS
FIREPOWER: 2500
ARMOR: 45,100
COVERAGE: 80%
MANEUVERABILITY: LOW
MAX VELOCITY: 235 m/s

Required Tech -   NONE
Upgrade Tech -   CRYSTAL HARVESTING ABILITY
                    REPAIR SYSTEMS (upgrade/captured)
                    ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

Beast Sentinel

FIREPOWER: 290
COVERAGE: 15%
MANEUVERABILITY: HIGH
ARMOR: 400
MAX VELOCITY: 225 m/s
MASS: 21 TONS

Required Tech - MICRO SHIP CONSTRUCTION (captured)
Upgrade Tech - FORCE FIELD LEVEL 1 (upgrade/captured)
                    FORCE FIELD LEVEL 2 (upgrade/captured)
                    FORCE FIELD LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)
                    ADVANCED SENSORS
                    ARMOUR LEVEL 3 (upgrade/captured)

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Union of BC Performers
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Patricia Rice
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Extra Special Thanks
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The Homeworld Team
Folks at WON
Alex Garden

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Technical Support Tel: (0118) 920 9111
Fax: (0118) 987 5603

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HAVAS INTERACTIVE UK Ltd.

Customer Services / Mail Order / Tech Support Department
2 Beacontree Plaza
Gillette Way
Reading • Berkshire
RG2 0BS
United Kingdom

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Hintline (UK callers only)
09068 660660

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